African Violet MAGAZINE

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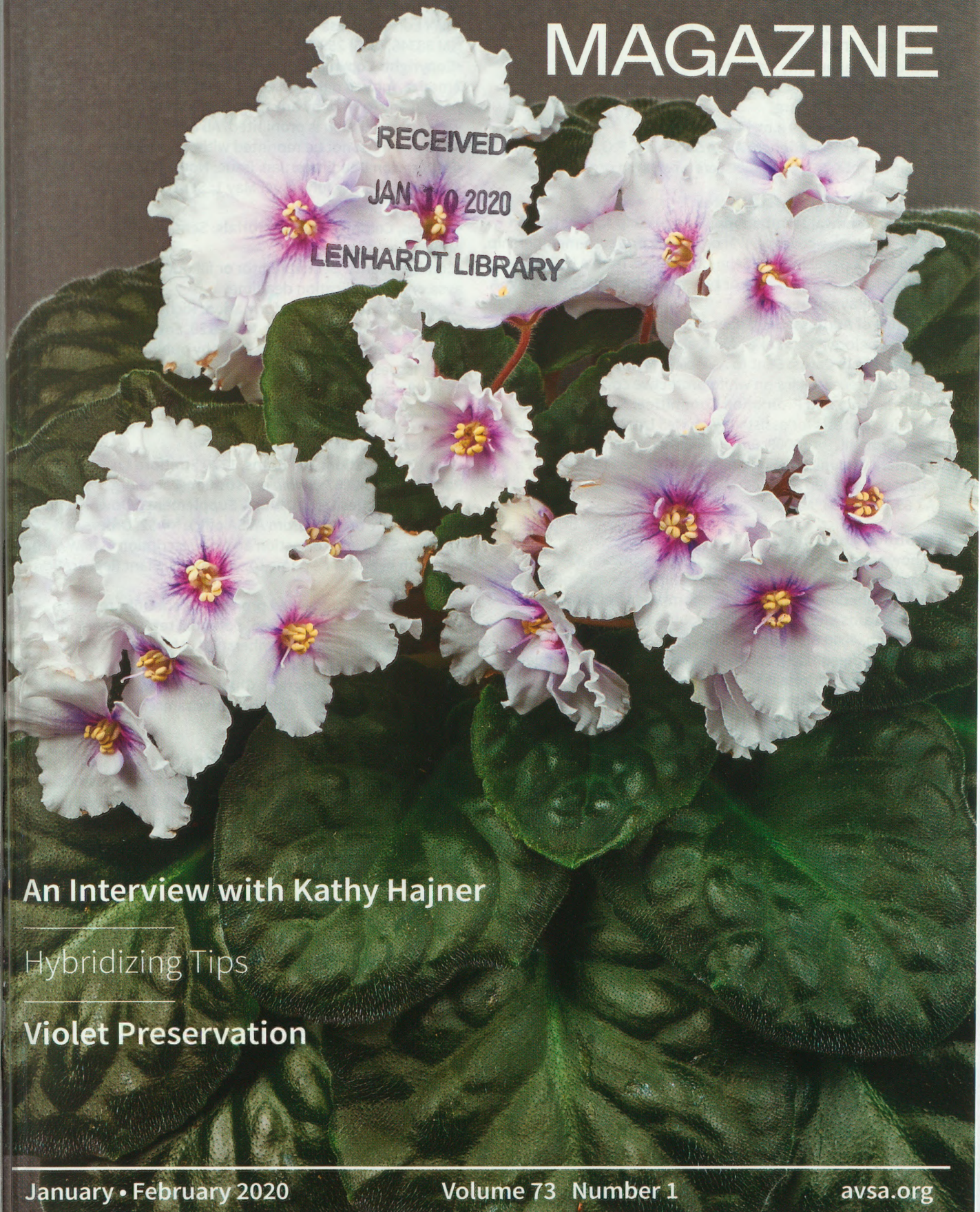

An Interview with Kathy Hajner

Hybridizing Tips

Violet Preservation

January • February 2020 Volume 73 Number 1 avsa.org

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•Judges' Duplicate Cards: Send self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email*: secondvp@avsa.org.

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African Violet Magazine

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•Master Varieties List (AMVL) & Supplements: Download from AVSA website or order from AVSA office for $2. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, Plant Registration (see above).
•Research: Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3014 W. Amherst Rd., Muncie, IN 47304. *Email:* jsmith4@bsu.edu.
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•Convention: Kathy Lahti, Convention Chair, 4157 Oliver Ave. N.W., Annandale, MN 55302. *Email:* convention@avsa.org.
•Future Dates: Little Rock, AR, May 24-May 31, 2020; Atlanta, GA, May 30-June 6, 2021. If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Chair.
•Convention Programs: Send special requests for workshop programs or interesting speakers to Convention Chair.
•Convention Awards: Send suggestions to: Sharon Gartner, 5036 Paradise Pond Lane, Jacksonville, FL 32207. *Email:* awards@avsa.org. Send contributions to AVSA Office.
•Commercial Activities, Sales and Exhibits: For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, 4710 W. Justin Lane, Spokane, WA 99208. *Email:* commercials@avsa.org.

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 73 Number 1

ON THIS COVER:
K's Favorite Trick
Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner
Hybridized by: K. Hajner
Standard
2019 Best New Cultivar – Commercial
Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

FEATURES

Water Damage Appeal—Randy Deutsch 5
Richard Nicholas 5
Calling All Techies—Candace Baldwin 6
AVSA News—Joyce Stork 6
Looks Like a Chimera, But—Ronn Nadeau 8
Thanks to Commercial Members 9
The Hybridization Process—Pat Hancock 10
Long-time Hybridizer Closes Shop 11
Beyond the Blossom:
Kathy Hajner—Richard Craft 12
Order AVSA Drinkware 25
Water and African Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 26
***AVM* Deadlines** 28
AVSA Violet
Preservation Committee—Rich Follett 31
Article Contest Update—Pat Hancock 44
Rooting Crowns—Will Key 46
My Collection—Kate Brown 49
Thrips—It's Always Plural—Jenny Enchayan 50
New Life for a
Once-Defunct Club—Rich Follett 56
Dr. Minh Bui:
New to the AVSA Family—Paul Kroll 58
African Violet Word Find Answers 61

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Buckeye Claret Wine—Debbie McInnis 7
SK-Yablonevyi Sad—Glenda Williams 16
SK-Volioushka—Debbie McInnis 17
Cajun's Freckleface Kid—Wayne Geeslin 21
Jersey Cloudchaser—Kathy Hajner 29
K's Devil's Due—Kathy Hajner 30
Mag's Volcanic Love—Marge Farrand 39
Fun Trail—Sam Cunningham 54
Jolly Mimi—Randy Deutsch 54
Nautilocalyx species—Kathryn Spissman 55
Skärt Litet Möln—Glenda Williams 55
Cajun's Party Favor—Belinda Thibodeaux 59
19-101—Kathy Hajner 60
19-104—Kathy Hajner 60

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser 3
Editor's Notes—Teresa Odle 4
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 18
Affiliate Update—Jeri Anderson 20
Coming Events 22
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 24
Registration Report—Joe Bruns 30
Family Portrait—Paul Kroll 32
AVSA Scholarship—Charles Ramser 42
Shows and Judges
Committee—Mary Corondan 48
In Memory 52
Anne and Frank Tinari
Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 57

CONVENTION

Welcome to Arkansas! 34
Luncheon Auction—Candace Baldwin 35
Souvenir Book Ads 35
Southern Food
Little Rock Style—Danny Tidwell 36
Convention Parking Information 37
Registration for Judging School 38
2020 Convention Awards—Sharon Gartner 40

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Index Of Advertisers

African Rainforest Conservancy 63
Amazon Smile—AVSA ..... Inside Back Cover
American Orchid Society ..... Inside Back Cover
AVS of Canada 62
Cryptanthus Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 62
Gesneriad Society 63
Glenda's House of Violets 62
Growing to Show—AVSA 63
Hobby Greenhouse ..... Inside Back Cover
Indoor Gardening Supplies 63
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery 64
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 62
Oyama Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 64
Physan 20 64
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Supply 62

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

As you read this message the holidays are behind us, winter is here and we are beginning to think about our spring shows, the AVSA Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, and wishing winter would transition to spring. We hope this New Year brings health and happiness to you and yours and your African violets and other gesneriads perform well for you at your upcoming shows.

It is with sadness that we report the passing of two more special members of our AVSA Family. Edna Rourke passed away peacefully in her sleep November 3, 2019. Richard Nicholas passed suddenly on November 22, 2019. We offer our sincere condolences to their families and friends; both will be greatly missed.

Office Update

The AVSA Office has been operating on limited-schedule hours while Office Manager Amy Carruth brings our day-to-day operations back. Due to the damage our computer equipment suffered, Amy has been processing daily work manually. The database currently is being restored. We will need new computer equipment and software to replace the equipment that suffered water damage, along with new storage racks and storage bins. At our Fall Executive Committee Meeting, we approved the Office Water Damage Appeal that Randy Deutsch, Fundraising Chair, presents on page 5. His article explains how you, our members, can help AVSA recover from this disaster and help restore our office operations.

Fall Executive Committee Meeting

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Mary Corondan as our new Shows and Judges Chair (see her report on page 48). Mary worked closely with Bill Foster in the past, which should make for a smooth transition. Please send all Shows and Judges correspondence to Mary. Susan Anderson has assumed the duties of Meredith Hall, who is retiring as Show Schedule Approver. Her contact information is on the inside front cover. Thank you to Meredith Hall for her service to AVSA as Schedule Approver.

... online Plant Registration is available on the website.

We are excited to announce that online Plant Registration is available on the website under the "About Us" tab on the home page. Thank you, Joe Bruns and the Plant Registration Committee for implementing the online registration.

New collection classes have been approved for the Little Rock Convention: Russian/Ukrainian Standard Collection and Russian/Ukrainian Mini/Semimini Collection. The plants entered in these collections will **not** need to be AVSA registered varieties.

We would like to thank Glenda Williams, AVSA Third Vice President, for volunteering to travel to Beaumont to assist Amy with the clean-up and move to the temporary AVSA Office location. Amy Carruth went above and beyond the "call of duty" to secure our AVSA assets; for this we thank Amy. We also would like to thank David Kesler for his technology expertise to help in assessing the damage to our office technology and in researching future office software needs. David is retiring as Technology Chair. Thank you, David, for your service to AVSA with the development of software products.

Through our continuing two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Editor's Notes

By Teresa G. Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

First, I want to welcome new members and subscribers to *African Violet Magazine*. I hope you will let me know how you like the magazine and relay questions or requests for article topics you might have. I also hope you will get involved in AVSA on the local, regional or national level. You are sure to learn a lot as you volunteer and make wonderful lifelong friends.

Annual Convention

Speaking of national involvement, we've got some of the details you need to start planning for the 2020 Annual Convention and Show in Little Rock, Arkansas (May 24 through 31). You can get involved by attending a judging school, helping with or contributing items to the Luncheon Auction, or advertising in the souvenir book. I, for one, am getting excited about the riverside location and how many restaurants and sights are within walking distance of the hotel (see page 36).

Special thanks to Danny Tidwell and Kathy Lahti for arranging all the details and sharing them with you in *AVM*. Watch next month for information on presentations and learn more about the convention and registration on our website (www.avsa.org/convention).

Of course, the show and sale always are popular activities at the Annual Convention. In this issue, we have a fascinating profile of one of our commercial members who only sells at convention and a fun look into how she names her African violet hybrids. See Richard Craft's article on page 12. And if you never have attended a national show, make plans to join us in Little Rock!

Article Contest

We continue to receive excellent articles for our article contest — and from other contributors. I want to thank everyone who submitted articles to this issue and to the November issue. I know fall is a busy time of year for many of you who show, followed by the holiday season. See our most recent winner of the article contest on page 44 and some photos from hybridizers who contribute prizes, coordinated by the ever-energetic Pat Hancock.

In this issue, we have a fascinating profile of one of our commercial members who only sells at convention ...

Writers' Guidelines

I've compiled some guidelines to help contributors to *AVM* and made them available on the magazine web page (www.avsa.org/magazine). They include tips on article structure and submitting photos and documents. These are to help answer your questions about matters such as article length, photographs for your articles, and type of file or format. Of course, they are *guidelines*, not rigid requirements. I realize our members have varied technological skills and tools at their disposal. So please send me an email, call or send your article by mail if you do not use email (see inside cover under *African Violet Magazine* for all my contact information). I will do my best to work with anyone who wants to contribute.

Thank you to everyone who has written to say how much you have enjoyed recent issues. I also want to thank members of the AVSA Editorial Board, especially Paul Kroll, for your ongoing advice and support. Happy 2020!

Office Water Damage Appeal

By Randy G. Deutsch, Fundraising Chair

With the cooperation and approval of the AVSA Executive Committee, the following announcement is being made:

As most of you know, the office in Beaumont experienced a very unexpected high water event that no one saw coming. This is the first time in known history that the water level reached as high as it did, which created a disastrous, toxic mess in the building that AVSA was in. Unfortunately, AVSA has now suffered a great deal of damage. This damage necessitated a quick and complete move to yet another building. Due to remaining toxic conditions, we are currently unable to go back into our original, leased location.

AVSA also has suffered some major equipment losses. The worst of these losses is the loss of our computer equipment, making it impossible, at this point, to access our membership software program. Several committees are working hard to get us up and running again, but we are now assessing our financial costs to accomplish this. We have no choice but to ask for our loyal members' continued support.

The current financial appeal to cover our costs is projected to end when our current disaster goal of $20,000 is raised. Please help AVSA in its time of need. Your continued support is very much appreciated.

The fastest and most cost-effective way to donate is to use the donation buttons on the website (www.avsa.org), which saves AVSA the cost of credit card fees when a member uses this method.

Dr. Richard Nicholas

Just before this issue of *AVM* went to press, we learned the sad news of the passing of Dr. Richard Nicholas, who served as AVSA President from June 2017 through May 2019 and became our Past President at the close of the Houston Convention. Of course, he did so much more in the education and African violet worlds and for family and friends. AVSA wants to express our deepest sympathy to Anne and her family.

Richard received a bachelor's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin and his master's degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. He retired from Texas Woman's University in Denton in 2014, following a career working at several universities around the country.

He and college sweetheart Anne married in 1970 and grew African violets together for 48 years. He also collected gems and minerals and stamps. He won many awards for his African violets and stamp collections.

Texas Woman's University will hold a memorial service for Richard January 19, 2020.

Calling all Techies!

By Candace Baldwin, Website Committee Chairman

Email: website@avsa.org

The AVSA website is in need of an upgrade and we are looking for some manpower to make it happen. Do you have Drupal or WordPress skills and a little spare time?

We are at the beginning of the planning stage of this important effort and are looking for volunteers to help with migrating the existing site, overhauling some parts and building out others.

In addition to technical knowledge, you'll need patience, enthusiasm, perseverance and a sense of humor. If you're up for a challenge and want to have some fun, all while making a huge, positive impact for AVSA, then come join us on the journey.

> Do you have Drupal or WordPress skills and a little spare time?

Contact website@avsa.org with your availability and/or questions.

Are You Getting Your AVSA Newsletter?

Notice: Due to a clerical error, many subscribers to the monthly *AVSA News* email recently were unsubscribed. If you wish to continue receiving the *AVSA News* email, please go to the AVSA website www. avsa.org and re-subscribe using the "Sign Up for AVSA Email" button on the right-hand side of the home page under the violet photo. As an alternative, you can email the editor at joycestork@ avsa.org to request that you be re-subscribed. Joyce offers her deepest apologies for the inconvenience.

AVSA | NEWS FOR MEMBERS

Of course, if you haven't yet signed up, be sure to add your name to receive timely, weekly updates on AVSA happenings.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Buckeye Claret Wine

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Large Standard

Looks Like a Chimera, But ...

By Ronn Nadeau St. Louis, Missouri

Email: avseeds@yahoo.com

This article is about some of the hybridizing and seed production work I've done during the past two years. The plants in the photos have short working names that allow for writing pollination data on Post-it flags that are then attached to flower stems. All the plants depicted here are my varieties, except for OMT (Optimara myTemptation). I do not sell plants or leaves, just seeds (Nadeaus AfricanVioletSeeds.com).

ROX and RAD have been with me for several years, and I use them because they produce attractive progeny when crossed with pollen from fancier commercial varieties or my own varieties. ROX and RAD have self-cleaning flowers, meaning the petals automatically drop off when the flowers die.

On the top, new varieties ROX (left) and RAD. On the bottom, Optimara myTemptation (OMT).

Sometimes, surprising results show up when hybridizing African violets. A good case in point is the cross ROX-pod X OMTpollen, which led to a seedling (below) that had a distinctive red "pattern" within a thick white border.

I named the seedling DANCE and wondered whether its bloom pattern would come true when cloned from leaves. The clones pictured below showed the red pattern, so DANCE is not chimeric.

DANCE seedling.

Cloned DANCE from leaves.

Next, I needed to learn if the DANCE pattern could be inherited by progeny via sexual propagation. So, I crossed it with one of my favorite seed producers (RADpod). I grew 16 of the resulting seedlings to

bloom stage, and two of them showed the DANCE pattern, but in blue instead of red. That seemed logical.

The blue DANCERs are named SKI and RUN. I am hybridizing with the blue "pattern" and might have more to report on it in 2020.

RADpod.

DANCEpollen.

SKI.

RUN.

Special Thanks to AVSA Commercial Members

As hybridizers prepare to show and sell their plants at the AVSA Annual Convention in Little Rock, we want to pause and thank them and all AVSA Commercial Members. If you have been to a national show and sale, you know just how popular the sales-room is to attendees (and why!). We get to meet, talk with and buy from top plant, seed and product suppliers.

The best way to learn more about what they have to offer is to be at the May sale and see for yourself. Next best? Check the ads in the back of *AVM* and in our weekly *AVSA News* and *Growing Tips* emails. See behind the scenes of hybridizers on our "Meet the Commercials" DVD in the AVSA Store. Or browse the listing — by state — of AVSA Commercial Members at avsa.org/commercials.

The Hybridization Process

By Pat Hancock Middletown, Ohio

Sometimes, it is hard to get the cross you want to "take" when hybridizing African violets. Double flowers are much harder to cross than singles or semi-doubles, and sometimes it is better to use the pollen from the double and the semidouble for the seed parent. Certain blossoms will not produce seed, no matter what you do. But don't get discouraged.

Pollen to Pistil

There are many ways to harvest pollen and get it onto the pistil, and I have tried most of them. When I first started trying to make seed, I used my finger to transfer the pollen, but none of my efforts took and I was discouraged. But after getting tips from others and plenty of practice, I found methods that worked for me. Here are some tips on pollinating I've learned over the years:

•**For the Seed Parent:** Choose a blossom that has been open for two or three days. The first blossom on the stem usually is ripe when the second blossom on the same stem begins to open. The stigma will look slightly wet and shiny.

•**For the Pollen Parent:** Choose a blossom that has been open no longer than three to four days. The pollen should appear powdery and should almost cover the blossom when the anthers are opened.

•**Cut off the flower** you choose for the pollen parent. Cut out the anthers from the seed parent and discard them.

•**Cut the tips** of the pollen flower's anthers and flick them with your finger or the scissors to spread the pollen over the face of the pollen flower. (You can take that flower with the pollen on it and touch the stigma with the flower itself.) Gently touch the stigma of the seed flower to this pollen flower or use your finger or a Q-tip cotton swab to put the pollen on the stigma. If the stigma is receptive, the tiny grains of pollen will stick to it and might even seem attracted to it. Be **very gentle** so you do not jam the end of the stigma.

•**Vibrate the stem.** About a year ago, a friend sent me a new tool called a VegiBee (made for vegetable growers) that vibrates the stem and collects the pollen in a small spoon, making this step easy and giving you a lot more pollen. I've demonstrated use of the helpful tool at club meetings.

Demonstrating how to use the VegiBee at an AVS Dayton meeting. Photo by Linda Lloyd.

•**Pollinate in this way,** with the same pollen, as many flowers on a single stem as possible. Seed pods seem to enjoy company and do better with several on a stem. Your chances of the crosses growing to maturity are better with several flowers. Never use different pollen on a single stem; it could be very confusing.

•**Immediately mark the stem** with the name of the pollen parent and the date of the cross. A piece of painter's tape works well, or you can purchase small tags attached to string and wrap a tag around the stem.

•**For the next four to six months,** maintain high humidity and ensure there is no mildew or thrips. Don't let the mother plant get too wet or too dry. Don't repot or do anything to disturb the plant.

•**The first indication that the cross** "took" will be the flower dying very quickly. Then the stem will start to crook and hide its head under a leaf. This is probably Mother Nature's way of protecting the seed pod.
•**If the pod matures and stays viable** for at least four months, you probably will have seed in it, perhaps 200 or more. When the pod starts to wilt, remove it and place it in a glass jar or envelope and store it in a dry place. Leave it until thoroughly dry (about two weeks). After that, it can be kept in the refrigerator for about three years or planted immediately.

Planting the Seeds

When all these steps go without a hitch, you will be ready to plant your seed. Your planting medium needs to be very light; I use Fox Farm's Light Warrior seed starter. I place it in a container with a clear top, (with holes punched in both the top and bottom). Salad containers that come from any fast food restaurant are perfect.

Place the seed pod over a light piece of paper that has been folded twice across the center to create a pocket, and then opened. The seed that falls onto the paper will look like black pepper.

> Be very gentle so you do not jam the end of the stigma.

Sprinkle the seeds gently over the moistened prepared bed, spreading them out as best you can. (Don't sneeze!) Put the lid on the container and place it so the seeds are about 4 to 6 inches from your light fixture. You should see seeds sprouting in about two to six weeks.

Do not let the seedlings dry out. They can be transplanted to Solo cups in a very short time and they will surprise you with their sturdiness. I have never lost a transplanted seedling.

It's great to have a goal but do not be disappointed if you get something completely different from what you expected or planned. There are a great many recessive genes in African violets and they often have a mind of their own.

Long-time Hybridizer Closes Shop

Former African violet hybridizers and friends of AVSA closed their nursery's doors last summer. Behnke Nurseries in Beltsville, Maryland, still had a thriving business, but no family members willing to take over the company. Rose Behnke is listed as hybridizer of 28 African violet hybrids registered between 1949 and 1969. Her interest in African violets began with a friend's gift to her daughter Sonja.

The Behnkes also participated in AVSA local clubs and contributed articles to AVM. Albert and Rose Behnke established their nursery in 1930 and sold outdoor plants and houseplants. Rose died in 1997. When the nursery closed last summer, the family chose not to sell the 10-plus acres to a developer, but to find a way to develop the property to benefit the community.

Meanwhile, Behnke Nurseries lives on in regular blog posts and gardening tips from Rose and Albert's grandchildren. They also visit and write about other plant nurseries. You also can search the site (behnkes.com) to read more about the history of Behnke's and the couple's love of African violets.

Beyond the Blossom — Kathy Hajner

By Richard Craft Las Vegas, Nevada

Can you mix famous racehorses and cocktail drinks? If you're Kathy Hajner of Hajner Hybrids, you can. That is, she mixes the two into names of her popular "K's" series of African violets.

Famous racehorses? If you know Kathy's background, you can easily surmise her reason for choosing names of champions of the racetrack. Kathy has a passion for horses and is an avid rider. She served as a riding camp director for two years and held jobs working with renowned trainers. She even once owned a barn and racehorse training business. Kathy still owns horses and enjoys riding them.

Cocktail drinks? That's the fun side of Kathy. Google some of those plant names/drinks to get the recipes. All have been taste-tested and approved by Kathy.

Kathy at the 2019 AVSA National Convention. Photo by Tom Glembocki.

Starting Gate

Kathy was born in New Jersey; her love for growing plants started around age 10. She describes herself as a "nature girl" who loved being outdoors. Her family always had a garden and Kathy liked spending time there. Her mother grew roses and was a tester for a major rose hybridizer. There were roses everywhere. Growing up in those surroundings inspired her love for plants indoors and out. "I've always loved plants. My parents knew that, and they encouraged that." Kathy recalls that she had plants all over the house and her dad added more space for her by building shelves along the windows.

Then the momentous day came: "My mom saw an ad in the paper for an African violet show" [hosted by a New Jersey AVSA club]. "That Saturday morning, she took me. I loved it. I just fell in love, there was no other plant in the world that was going to top the list. I talked to the women there and got some basic information on how to grow and care for it. I bought a few and it just took off from there."

Back in the day before Internet searching, Kathy would visit the public library and gather as much information as she could about African violets. This included catalogs from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses and Ronn Nadeau. The Nadeau catalog "had a little description of how to hybridize and what the seed pods looked like and that just intrigued me. I fell in love with that. I started hybridizing when I was in junior high just to see what I could get." Kathy started some crosses with unnamed violets to see if she could get seed pods, and succeeded. She planted the seeds and was thrilled to see them germinate and take root.

Throughout high school, Kathy kept growing African violets and eventually took her plants with her to college in upstate New York. Her studies were in biochemistry and she considered becoming a veterinarian. She finished her schooling with a teaching certificate in special education and science. With a degree in hand, it was Kathy's dream to move West. So, with $600 in her pocket, she loaded her car with her dog and all her worldly possessions and moved to Colorado.

Kathy's fervor for creating new violets also returned. She began hybridizing again and eventually amassed more than 500 African violets. But getting married and raising two kids eventually sidelined any serious hybridizing efforts. Life got even busier and Kathy soon discovered that growing conditions in the mountains of Colorado were not ideal for her violets. All those factors led to the eventual demise of her entire collection.

After 11 years in Colorado, Kathy packed up the family and moved to Peralta, New Mexico. As the kids grew and became more independent, she ventured back into growing violets. But the growing conditions still were very different. At 4,860 feet above sea level, the high-desert climate of Peralta proved to be another challenge to grow a plant she first fell in love with as a child. Yet Kathy was resolute in her approach to successfully grow and hybridize violets in her new environment.

Going the Distance

The website for Peralta has a slogan: "Preserving the Past for Future Generations." It exemplifies what Kathy is doing as an African violet hybridizer — growing African violets from the past, preserving their heritage and creating a sustainable strain for the future.

When Kathy first started growing violets, she would go to shows and gaze at the plants, but was not inspired to show her violets. After learning to deal with the challenges of growing a beautiful show plant, it's something she enjoys doing now and has helped improve her hybridizing.

About Kathy

Kathy is a botany teacher at the School of Dreams Academy in Los Lunas, New Mexico. One of her special projects involves her high school students growing violets throughout the school year and exhibiting them in a year-end violet show. (See "New Mexico Student Growers Take Violets Seriously," *AVM*, July/August 2018.)

She can be found on Facebook. Search for @hajnerhybrids.

Perpetually evaluating her own hybrids, Kathy professes, "I'm always critiquing myself, seeing where I can improve. ... I'm not doing a whole lot of one-time crosses anymore. Mine are now into second-, third-, fourth-, even fifth-generation crosses. (At a minimum, she grows out all her crosses through the four seasons to ensure their hardiness.) Kathy continues, "I know my genetics; of my violets. I do think that's important."

Nicks (Hybridizing Goals)

What criteria is Kathy looking for in choosing the parent plants to cross? These are the factors, in order, she deems most important in creating her new hybrids:

1. Durability. The first important test was to find existing African violets that grew well in the New Mexico desert. "I can't grow the ones that tend to grow in humid environments. I don't get the bloom count; I don't get the size." She adds, "I took the ones that were really doing well for me." One that grew surprisingly well for Kathy was Jersey Snowflakes (R. Kurzynski). If a violet can't endure the conditions under which she grows, then she will eliminate it from her shelf. This includes new crosses as well. Conditions not only include the high-desert environment, but a pH fluctuation in her well water of between 6.0 and 8.0. "I don't want to sacrifice [durability] to create a super, super beautiful show plant. I'd like mine to grow just about anywhere."

One of Kathy's seedlings under evaluation. Photo by Kathy Hajner.

2. Unique blossoms. For inspiration, Kathy pores through today's catalogs (such as Parks and Burpees) looking for brand new colors and patterns of daisies, black-eyed Susans, pansies, etc. "I think we have room for that in violets. I want to keep exploring that, keep pushing that limit." Kathy also is looking into the current crop of Russian/Ukrainian cultivars and

using them in her crosses. "I like the bold crazy patterns with lots of different colors on a larger open-faced blossom."

3. Really good foliage symmetry. Once she gets the above characteristics bred into a plant, she asks, "How am I going to cross this to improve the foliage?" She will occasionally post a photo of one of her new seedling's blossoms on her Facebook page. Kathy points out that the specific cross might never be released unless she can successfully cross it with something having great foliage.

Apprentice Jockey

Kathy's first experience with an AVSA club was in New Jersey. But it wasn't until 2013 that she joined a local club. She had a bunch of extra violets through her hybridizing that she wanted to get rid of. She discovered the Albuquerque African Violet Club. They are "such a great group of people," she says.

Kathy notes that she quickly became friends with Sharon Shannon, president of the Albuquerque AV club. Sharon is "super friendly, super helpful. I've seen her go way out of her way to help even non-members who come in and have questions. She will do house visits for people to see their violets and help them out right in their houses. She spends a lot of time and invests a lot of herself in the club and the people."

K's Angel's Share from the Best Horticulture Showcase award, 2019. Photo by Richard Craft.

Kathy began showing her violets with the Albuquerque club. Later that year, she showed her hybrids at the 2013 AVSA convention in Austin, Texas. She says she had no idea what she was doing. "Joyce and Kent Stork went out of their way to really help me out, to support me, to educate me [when] they didn't have to." She developed a good relationship with them.

K's Shenanigans, Best Horticulture Showcase, 2019. Photo by Richard Craft.

K's Devil's Due from the 2019 Best Horticulture Showcase. Photo by Richard Craft.

Win, Place, Show

At the 2019 AVSA National Convention in Houston, Texas, Kathy took top honors for her new introductions, including:

- Best Horticulture Showcase.
- Best New Cultivar-Commercial '19-102' (renamed to 'K's Favorite Trick'), the Horse of the Year at the 1997 Eclipse Awards (an American thoroughbred horse racing award). He retired with a record of 12 wins and was the leading New Mexico-based sire of 2006 (see this issue's cover).
- Third Best Cultivar-Commercial '19-101' (still unnamed.)

In addition, she has won best new cultivar awards for K's Lilac Infusion (Amateur, 2014) and K's Salsarita (Commercial, 2016), along with local and national awards for other new cultivars and show plants.

Close-up of blossoms on 19-101. Photo by Richard Craft.

Foaling Season

What does Kathy have in the paddock in the way of new African violets? One of her pet projects involves an unusual African violet by the name of Lunar Lily White. The intriguing element is the white blossom that is a pansy variant with elongated petals. Using pollen from Lunar Lily White, she crossed it to one of her hybrids.

After almost 10 years of development, Kathy has managed to come up with a stable cross presenting variegated foliage. At this time, she has no plans of releasing any of the crosses. However, Kathy has a series of semi-miniature violets in development using other crosses. She hints that one might be ready for release by summer 2020. Think semi-mini with dark two-tone blossoms topped with purple, almost black tips.

Another of Kathy's new seedlings under evaluation. Photo by Kathy Hajner.

Currently, Kathy has 22 registered cultivars in First Class. Enjoy going through the list of names and trying to figure out whether they are based on a cocktail or a famous racehorse (although a few don't fit into those two categories. For instance, K's Purple Hog was named for the Harley-Davidson motorcycle that her friend Sharon Shannon rides.)

At the moment, Kathy plans to sell her plants only at shows, including the 2020 AVSA National Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, this year (May 24 through 31). Stop by her sales tables; she loves to talk to her customers.

Dirt Track

When it comes to growing African violets, Kathy's motto is "Keep it simple." She doesn't use anything expensive or hard to find.

Growing medium:
SunGro Horticulture Sunshine Mix #4 adding extra perlite.

Fertilizer:
Dyna-Gro Grow 7-9-5.

Lighting:
Fluorescents T-12 and T-8. Kathy has also had success with 4-foot LED fixtures (3200 lumen) 8 to 9 inches above the plants with a sheer curtain material for light diffusion for 7 to 8 hours a day with supplemental natural lighting.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

SK-Yablonevyi Sad

Exhibited by: Glenda Williams
Hybridized by: A. Kuznetsov
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

SK-Volioushka

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: A. Kuznetsov
Standard

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Indiana Academy, Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

Welcome to a new year and a new decade. I am hopeful that there will be an announcement about a new type of variegated African violet before the end of the year. I have seen pictures of the plant, but have been asked not to describe or share the pictures pending the results of some investigations. There is a question about whether the variegation is a new genetic trait or if it is possibly the result of a virus. The grower is being very careful in the analysis, but the methods for telling a new trait from a viral infection are limited. The grower wants to be very sure of what they have before going public.

There is a historical precedent for this; early accounts of mosaic variegation thought it might be a viral infection. An important test for mosaic variegation was that non-variegated plants deliberately exposed to leaf sap and potential infection by a virus never developed mosaic foliage. This suggested that mosaic variegation was not the result of a virus. Later, mosaic foliage was found to be inherited sexually, even if it is a bit stubborn on being expressed in offspring.

Similar tests are currently underway for the potentially new leaf variegation trait. The grower already knows that the trait inherits through leaf cuttings, but that could be true for a genetic trait or a viral infection. The hybridizer is studying whether the sap from ground-up leaves can "infect" non-variegated plants, as would be expected for a virus. If this test fails repeatedly, then the trait is less likely to be a viral infection. Crosses also are being made to see if the trait can be inherited sexually. If the trait inherits through the seed parent, but not the pollen parent, this might be evidence that the trait is genetic and not caused by a virus. However, all these tests take time.

I commend the caution of the grower in testing this new trait to try to determine whether it is genetic or from a virus. If the tests support that the variegation is genetic, it will be an exciting new find in African violets. Stay tuned for further updates.

I am hopeful that there will be an announcement about a new type of variegated African violet before the end of the year.

Q: Why do fantasy plants sometimes produce solid-colored blooms?

A: The fantasy trait is due to a strange genetic segment called a transposon, or jumping gene. This small piece of DNA literally jumps in and out of the chromosome DNA. When it moves, it alters the expression of the trait by either turning the gene off or allowing the gene to be expressed normally. Fantasy plants produce their dots and dashes of color as the transposons move in and out of small groups of neighboring cells. For example, a transposon that jumps out of the gene for "blue" will allow the cells to produce blue pigment. A group of cells with this trait will produce a blue dot. Cells that retain the transposon are blocked from expressing "blue" and will remain pink in color.

Sometimes, the transposon moves very early in a flower's development. The descendent cells that form the flower might be locked into one color form such as solid color and all resulting cells carry the

change. In some cases, only parts of the flower are affected. This results in flowers that are half-solid color and half fantasy. Another option might be a single petal or part of a petal that is solid color. The timing of the change in the development and growth of the bloom stalk might cause one or two flowers to be solid colored while the rest are fantasy, as expressed in the question. All variations in solid color reflect differences in the timing of when the transposon "jumped."

Q: If a leaf cutting from a fantasy plant blooms with solid-colored flowers, will the plant ever sport back to fantasy?

A: It is very unlikely that a solid-colored plant will revert back to fantasy. The solid color indicates that the transposon segment has likely been lost in this plant. That makes reinsertion of the transposon back into the DNA to cause fantasy highly unlikely.

Having said this, I have heard rumors of plants with solid-colored flowers that have partially or totally sported back to fantasy, but I don't have any hard evidence to back up these claims. If it does occur, I would think the probability would be very low.

Q: If I use a solid flower on a fantasy plant in a cross, will the fantasy trait still be inherited in the seedlings?

A: I have seen one case where a solid-colored seedling from Rebel's Splatter Kake passed on fantasy somehow to a seedling or two in the next generation. It appears that inheriting fantasy from a solid flower is possible, but probably highly unlikely. If you want to pass on fantasy to the seedlings, I would recommend using a fantasy-marked flower as the seed or pollen parent.

Q: If I use a leaf chimera as the seed parent, will I get leaf chimeras in the offspring?

A: The exact mechanism for the inheritance of leaf chimeras is unknown to me and I have never had a conversation with a hybridizer who was willing to share their data. However, I know that flower chimeras rarely pass on the chimera trait to offspring when used as either a seed or pollen parent. The chimera trait is due to a particular arrangement in the tissues of the plant, not in the expression of a traditional genetic trait. This tissue arrangement is rarely inherited in the offspring. I am speculating that leaf chimeras are similar to flower chimeras in the need for a particular tissue arrangement. Therefore, using a leaf chimera as a seed or pollen parent is probably not likely to produce leaf chimeras in the offspring.

Another way of looking at the question is to review data on how many new cultivars are leaf chimeras. The trait is very popular, but it has not become common in the newly released hybrids. Any trait that is easy to work with should rapidly become common in new hybrids released by hybridizers. To give an example, the thumbprint pattern was unheard of several years ago. However, once released, hybridizers were able to produce many new plants with this flower pattern. We now know that thumbprint flowers are a genetic dominant trait.

It is very easy to pass a genetic dominant trait on to offspring. Even traits that are genetic recessives, such as coral flower colors, can be bred into new hybrids rapidly. A trait that is popular but not showing up in new hybrids must have a complex or difficult inheritance mechanism. I would argue that the continued rarity of leaf chimera hybrids is a strong indicator that the trait does not follow traditional inheritance patterns. Otherwise, I think the ingenuity of our hybridizers would be producing many new cultivars with the leaf chimera trait.

Q: Can leaf chimera plants change over time? I have seen plants of Harmony's Little Stinker that looked very different from each other.

A: Yes, leaf chimeras can shift in their tissue arrangements over time and develop into clones that are somewhat different from each other. Harmony's Little Stinker is a good case in point. Some clones have very wide variegation patterns and others are much narrower.

If you look closely at the flower chimeras, you can sometimes pick up the same sort of changes. Some clones have very narrow stripes in the petals and others have wider stripes. Petals are generally narrower than leaves so the differences are often hard to detect in flower chimeras as compared to leaf chimeras.

AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson, Affiliate Chair

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

January is the time for setting goals for the year. My personal goal is to have an update date for every club listed on our AVSA website. There still are several clubs that have never been updated. So, please check your club's information on the AVSA website and confirm that your club has an update date.

When I receive club update information and event information, I make an effort to have the information posted within a week. If you have not received a confirmation email from me after a week, please send me an email. I have had a person post a club update that I somehow never received and another person post an event that I did not receive. I have no explanation as to why the information didn't come to my mailbox; I blame computer gremlins.

AVSA Website

Have you noticed the "Sign up for AVSA Email" button on the AVSA.org home page? You can add your name and email address to receive weekly growing tips and monthly AVSA news. I encourage you to sign up.

So many people are shopping on Amazon these days and you can help AVSA earn 0.5% of your purchase price by using the "Amazon Smile" button found at the bottom of the AVSA.org home page. It's "free" for you and AVSA can use every penny.

The Website Committee is working on making some updates to the website. I put in a request to have an area where club meeting ideas could be posted. I think it's a common problem to come up with meeting ideas that keep members' interest, instead of yet another demonstration on putting down a leaf.

If your club has interesting or fun meeting ideas to share, you can start sending them to me now. It would be nice to have a few ready whenever there is a place to post on our website.

If your club has interesting or fun meeting ideas to share, you can start sending them to me now.

New and Forming Clubs

The **Sunshine State Gesneriad and African Violet Society** of Florida has become an AVSA affiliate. Welcome!

We have a long list of members working to start a club:

•Vikki Ivey: Greenville, SC; Email: vivey@att.net
•Pam Brown: Buckhannon, WV; Email: psbrn0249@gmail.com
•Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY; Email: missjeannae@yahoo.com
•Mary Ann Markey: Port Charlotte, FL;
Email: drmaogrady@gmail.com
•Rebecca Klase: Greensboro, NC;
Email: rklase@ gmail.com
•Sam Cunningham: Houston, TX;
Email: sam-cunningham@outlook.com

Hopefully, someone will be interested in joining a club in one of these areas. If you are trying to start a new club in your area, please contact the Affiliate Chair for help.

There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Cajun's Freckleface Kid

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin
Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux
Standard
From Best AVSA Standard Collection

Coming Events

January 25 — Colorado
Rocky Mountain Streptocarpus Society
Tagawa Gardens
7711 So. Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Trudy Brekel: 303-452-9015
love4violets@yahoo.com

February 7-8 — Florida
First Lakeland African Violet Society
Annual Show
Christ Lutheran Church
2715 Lakeland Hills Blvd.
Lakeland, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sales)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (sales)
Mary Jane DiLorenzo: 863-529-5420
mjdilo92@gmail.com
Firstlakelandafricanvioletsociety.com

February 22 — Minnesota
AV Society of MN and North Star AV Council
AVSA Judging School
In Fridley or Blaine; to be decided
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Barbara Werness: 763-754-3918
bwerness@comcast.net

March 6-8 — California
Central California African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Fresno Fairgrounds
1121 S. Chance Avenue, Fresno, CA
Sale: Friday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m. (sale); noon-7 p.m. (show)
Sunday: 10 a.m. 6 p.m. (sale); 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (show)
Lola Sutherland: 559-906-7366
Teri Watkins: 559-260-9233
fresnoviolets@gmail.com
fresnoviolets.org
Charge for Home and Garden Show;
Contact for free admission.

March 14 — California
South Coast African Violet & Gesneriads Society
Judged Show and Sale
South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
Show: 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sale: 11 a.m.-4 pm.
Carolyn Griswold: 310-821-9862
gris822@msn.com

March 14-15 — Colorado
Rocky Mountain African Violet Council
Annual Spring Show and Sale
Tagawa Gardens
7711 S. Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (show);
10 a.m.-2 p.m. (sale)
Trudy Brekel: 303-452-9015
violetlady7@msn.com

March 21 — Texas
First Austin African Violet Society
Judged Show and Plant Sale
Austin Area Garden Center, Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Susan Kautz: 512-365-1818
gizzmo@austin.rr.com
Fee for Zilker Botanical Gardens

March 27-28 — Florida
Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society
Juried Show and Sale
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sharon Gartner: 904-536-4182
svioletlady@gmail.com

April 3-5 — Virginia
Richmond African Violet Society
Show and Plant Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Ave.
Richmond, VA
Friday: 1-5 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 1-5 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale)
Sunday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (sale)
Sharon Long: 804-740-5322
Slong15781@aol.com
richmondavs.wordpress.com

April 4-5 — New Jersey
African Violet Club of Morris County
Judged Show and Sale
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Haggerty Education Building
353 E. Hanover Ave.
Morristown, NJ
Saturday: 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Karyn Cichocki: kdc05@ptd.net

April 5 — Ontario
Toronto African Violet and Gesneriad Society
Annual Show and Sale
Toronto Botanical Garden
777 Lawrence Ave. East
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Julie Thompson: jmthompson50@xplornet.ca
tavgs.ca
Admission: $2

April 11 — Missouri
Sho-me African Violet Club
Show and Sale
Loose Park Garden Center
51st and Wornall
Kansas City, MO
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Brent Scheuerman: 913-738-9955
christopherviolets@yahoo.com
www.facebook.com/groups/KansasCityAV/

April 17-18 — Minnesota
African Violet Society of Minnesota
Show and Sale
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive NE
Blaine, MN
Friday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Kathy Lahti: lahti@lakedalelink.net
https://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota

April 18-19 — Québec
Société des Saintpaulia de Montréal
Annual Judged Show and Sale
Chalet du Parc Maisonneuve
4601 Rue Sherbrooke Est
Montreal, Quebec
Saturday: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
saintpauliamontreal@hotmail.com
facebook.com/SaintpauliaMontreal
saintpaulia-montreal.com

April 25-26 — Massachusetts
Bay State African Violet Society, Inc.
Annual Show and Plant Sale
Tower Hill Botanic Garden
11 French Drive, Boylston, MA
Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dawna DiOrio: DDiOrio@cmopc.com
Cynthia Brooks: cybrooks@charter.net
baystateafricanvioletsociety.wildapricot.org

April 25 — Ontario
Lakeshore African Violet Society of Toronto
Annual Show and Sale
St. Philip's Lutheran Church
61 West Deane Park Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Beverley Williams: 905-620-1149
beverleyandbrucewilliams@rogers.com
lakeshoreavs.com

May 2, 2020 — Connecticut
AVSA Judging School
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broadstreet
Windsor, CT
Nancy G. Hayes, Teacher: 860-242-0162;
cell: 860-930-6260
9 Cobblestone Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002
violetnancy@comcast.net

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

■ **African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta, GA — Winners:**
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Rebel's Rosebud, Buckeye Seductress; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Lil Tizzy, Jersey Little Devil, Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Rosebud; Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Lil Tizzy; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Suzanne Myers**.
•Best Miniature: Jolly Cupid, **Pam Kopec**.
•Best Species: *S. teintensis*, **Johnnie Berry**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Nimbus', **Kathy Spissman**.
•Best Design, **Phillis Hinkle**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Johnnie Berry and Mark Jackson (tie)**.

■ **African Violet Society of Philadelphia, PA — Winners:**
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, LE-Leto Krasnoe, Buckeye Lady Love; Best Species: S. 5h clone *rupicolus*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Karen Dirzuweit**.
•Best in Show/Best Standard: Redoubled, **Carol Hastings**.
•Best Semiminiature: Rob's Argyle Socks; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Judy Smith**.
•Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Fawn Frolic, **Sue Hanna**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus* hybrid, **Florence Brems**.

■ **Lone Star African Violet Council, TX — Winners:**
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Cajun's Hot Expectations; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Hot Expectation, **Wayne Geeslin**.
•2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Lady Love, Mary Craig, Jersey Snow Flakes; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Hunter's Chickadee Chirps, Cajun's Lil Forever Blue, Honey Blue Ace; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Ace; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Corondan**.
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jazz Bouquet, Jolly Texan, Rob's Little Butterfly, **Deborah McInnis**.
•Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Lil Joy, **Penny Smith-Kerker**.
•Best Trailer: Baby Brian; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Chicken Little', **Shelli McCauley**.
•Best Species: S. clone *pendulus* var. *kizarae*, **Jo Schrimsher**.
•Best Design: **Paul Kroll**.
•Design Sweepstakes: **Danny Tidwell**.

■ **Missouri Valley AV Council, MO — Winners:**
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Call Me Friend, The Alps, Rhapsodie Ingrid; Best Species: S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Randy Deutsch**.
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Kitten Caboodle, Ness' Satin Rose, Jolly Magic; Rob's Combustible Pigeon, **Sue Melson**.
•2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Honey Blue Ace, Jolly Orchid, Little Blue Bandit, **Randy McMahill**.
•Best in Show/Best Trailer: Aly's Rosy Baby; Best Design, **B. J. Ohme**.
•Best Standard: Ma's Debutante, **Carol Tjaden**.
•Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Merna Addison**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Loki', **Linda Hall**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Fran Russom**.

■ **New York State AVS, NY — Winners:**
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Stargate, Waterdancer, Frosted Brandy; Best in Show/Best Standard: Waterdancer, **Doug Burdick**.
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Mac's Misty Meadow, Teen Sweetheart, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Miniature: Precious Red, **Donna Coleman**.
•2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Dust Storm, Jolly Fairy, Heaven's Smile, **Carolyn Klein**.

•Best Species Collection: S. 5b *grotei* Silvert, S. 3 clone *shumensis* Mather EE, S. 5i clone *velutinus*; Best Species: S. 5i clone *velutinus*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Paul Kroll**.
•Best Trailer: RS-Zimnyk Tsvetok, **Cindy Fagan**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Gloxinia eronoides* 'Chapada dos Guimaraes', **Jill Fisher**.
•Best Design, **Jane Feldman**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Sayeh Beheshti**.

Ohio State AVS, OH — Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Daydreamer, Cajun's Flamboyant Mistress, Cajun's Freckleface Kid; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Star, Ice Age, Jolly Prince, **Paul Sorano**.

•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Petite Blarney, Windsome; Best Species Collection: S. 5i clone *velutinus* Amazon, S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237, S. 5h clone Kacharoroni; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Miniature: Petite Blarney, **Debbie McInnis**.
•Best Semiminiature: Hector, **Rie Somlai**.
•Best Trailer: Beauteous; Best Species: S. 5c2 clone *diplotrichus* Parker, **John de Saavedra**.
•Best Gesneriad: *x Rhytidoneria* 'Ako Cardinal Flight', **Paul Kroll**.

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Proceeds benefit the African Violet Society of America Inc.

Water and African Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith Muncie, Indiana

Email: Jsmith4@bsu.edu

All growers of African violets know that their plants require water. Water is the most abundant chemical molecule found in the plants. It carries dissolved nutrients from the soil to the leaves. Water helps the plant cells expand and grow, and water evaporating from plants cools the plant and prevents overheating.

However, have you ever stopped to consider the source of your water and how it might affect your plants? Are there different kinds of water? Will just any source of water work, or do some sources of water offer advantages compared to others? The purpose of this article is to look at various sources of water for growing your African violets.

Rainwater

A starting place to discuss water is to consider the water with which the wild species African violets grow. Many of the species plants grow on rock outcrops, cliffs, near waterfalls, sides of mountains or other exposed places, and usually under a canopy of trees. The soil often is thin, poor in nutrients and rapidly draining. The species violets' water comes from rainfall.

Contrary to folklore, African violets can get their leaves wet. The water damage that occurs to plants in cultivation usually is because the water is too cold or a leaf burns when drops of water act like magnifying glasses and concentrate sunlight on the leaf. Species violets grow in warm climates and under the shade of trees. They rarely suffer the kind of damage from water that growers are concerned about on our cultivated plants.

Some growers collect and use rainwater on their plants. An advantage to using rainwater is that it is soft water without harsh minerals. Rainwater also is slightly acidic due to dissolved carbon dioxide from the air forming carbonic acid, a weak natural acid. This acidity helps maintain the proper pH for African violets. The disadvantages might be in the collection of rainwater. Water coming off roofs can have all kinds of dissolved chemicals in it. These can be chemicals from shingles or other roofing materials, dust particles, soot, smog or other chemicals that have settled on the roofs. It is advisable not to collect the first rainwater coming off the roof to allow these chemicals to be flushed out before saving the rainwater for use.

The species violets' water comes from rainfall.

Rainwater will be poor in nutrients, so pay careful attention to fertilizers. For example, rainwater naturally is deficient in the trace minerals that plants need, such as copper and zinc. Therefore, fertilizers that contain trace minerals usually are necessary for proper plant growth when using rainwater.

Collecting rainwater might not be practical in areas that have low yearly rainfall or have seasonal rains, especially if your plant collection is large and you need many gallons of water each week. However, rainfall storage systems can help you to meet your water needs. Depending on where and how the rainwater is stored, it also can be helpful to warm up the water before adding it to your plants. Adding cold rainwater to wicking system reservoirs isn't a problem, but cold rainwater added directly to the soil mix can shock and stunt the growth of roots. Water that is at or near room temperature should not cause a problem.

Tap Water

Many growers use their house water or tap water on their plants. The advantage is that there is a constant supply and growers can easily regulate the temperature of the water. The biggest disadvantage is that the quality of tap water varies greatly depending on the source of the water. Many people have "hard water," or water that has a high amount of dissolved minerals such as calcium, magnesium and iron. Although these are elements necessary for plant growth, the concentration of these elements in tap water can be high enough to harm plants.

Hard water will form deposits on pots, can cause spots if splashed on the leaves, and can damage the roots. If the tap water comes from a city source, the water's pH often is adjusted to be slightly alkaline (pH greater than 7) because acidic water (pH lower than 7) slowly dissolves copper pipes. African violets can handle the pH change for a time, but continual use eventually can change the pH of the soil and harm the plant.

Homeowners with hard water often use a water softener to reduce the mineral content. Under no conditions should you use softened water on houseplants. Water softeners use salts to replace the minerals in hard water and produce soft water. Even if the salts are potassium based (potassium is a mineral that plants need and is found in fertilizer), the salts will quickly build up in the soil mix and destroy the roots.

Another common problem with tap water from a city source is that the water has been treated with chlorine or chloramines to kill bacteria. Chlorine will evaporate from water. Many older African violet references recommended letting water sit for 24 hours to allow the chlorine to dissipate. This used to work fine, but chlorine now has been replaced by the more chemically stable chloramines, which do not evaporate over time. Letting water sit for several days will not remove chloramines.

The only practical way to remove chloramines is to use water treatment materials for aquariums that protect fish from this chemical. These products will safely remove chloramines and protect your plants. Left untreated, chloramines will build up over time and kill African violets and other houseplants.

Letting water sit for several days will not remove chloramines.

There are a couple of ways to use tap water and minimize problems in your African violets. One method is to regularly flush or leach the soil of your plants with spring water, distilled water or reverse osmosis water. The idea is to flood the pots with the pure water and let it carry salts, extra minerals and chloramines out the drainage holes at the bottom of the pots. Of course, you must quickly discard the water that flows out of the pot or the soil will reabsorb the water and reduce the efficiency of the treatment. Some growers flush their plants at least once a month as a preventive treatment.

Another option is to repot your plants frequently in fresh soil mix. This should keep the most actively growing roots in fresh soil and minimize the damage from salts, minerals and chloramines. Removing some of the old soil mix from the roots each time you repot also helps prevent buildup. Gentle repotting also stimulates root growth. These are several reasons why many growers repot regularly.

Reverse Osmosis Water

Reverse osmosis (RO) water has gained great popularity with African violet growers. The process forces tap (or well) water through a membrane under pressure. The membrane separates extra minerals, contaminants and chloramines so the water that emerges from the RO system is nearly pure. RO water is like rainwater in its benefits, being soft and slightly acidic. Like rainwater, RO water is nearly devoid of minerals so growers must add fertilizers, including trace elements, to provide proper nutrition for their plants.

The biggest disadvantage to RO water is the cost of the RO units. A range of RO products are available, but most cost several hundred dollars. You can purchase RO water at larger grocery stores for reasonable prices. If you are considering switching to RO water, you might try growing part of your African violet

collection on purchased RO water, see how your plants respond, and then consider the costs/benefits of owning your own RO system.

Dehumidifier Water

A less traditional source of soft water that might be available in some homes is from dehumidifiers. Homes with basements might have dehumidifiers to reduce the water content of the air. Most dehumidifiers can be set up to collect the water, which you can store and use on African violets. This water is like rainwater or RO water, being mostly mineral free and slightly acidic. Adding fertilizers with trace minerals is necessary to provide good nutrition to the plants.

Dehumidifier water might be cold because of the collection process and you might need to warm the water before use. I collect and use dehumidifier water, but usually mix it with warm treated tap water to raise the temperature of the final water that I use on the plants. Some dehumidifier units are subject to mold growth, so watch for this potential problem with your plants.

Fish Aquarium Water

Another less traditional source of water is from fish aquariums. Most aquariums and fish benefit from a partial water change each week. Allow the siphoned-off aquarium water to settle to remove solid waste materials and carefully pour the water off and collect it. The chemical composition of this water varies, but often contains waste products such as nitrates or ammonia from fish that can serve as fertilizer for your plants.

Aquarium water often is good for delicate plants such as freshly potted cuttings or seedlings that have limited root systems traditional mineral fertilizers could damage. Aquarium water can be hard or soft depending on the nature of the aquarium; the pH also will vary. Only use water from fresh-water aquariums. Water from brackish or salt-water aquariums contains high concentrations of dissolved salts and can damage the plants. Aquarium water is fine for casual growing but is likely too variable in composition for the serious grower of show plants, where water quality consistency is necessary.

Whatever your source of water, African violets will do well in water that avoids extremes. The water should not be too hard or too soft. Plants need some fertilizer or minerals for nutrition, so add these if lacking. The water should be slightly acidic or close to neutral in pH. The water should not contain chlorine or chloramines. The water should be neither too cold nor too hot, but similar to the temperature of the growing location. Growers who can keep these requirements in mind should be able to use water from several different sources.

African Violet Magazine Article and Column Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

Please send articles for the *AVM* to the editor (editor@avsa.org).

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Jersey Cloudchaser

Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner
Hybridized by: B. Kurzynski
Standard
From Commercial Showcase

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Hiroko Endo — Chiba City, Japan

Masamune
•(11245) 08/23/2019 H. •Endo/T. Ogawa
•Single chimera blue pansy/white stripe.
•Medium green, pointed, quilted, glossy.
•Standard.

New Plant Registration Process

AVSA has instituted a new plant registration process. The registration application now is available as a downloadable, fillable PDF form that you can complete on your computer and submit by email. In addition, you can pay the registration fee online. Information on the new e-registration process can be found at: http://avsa.org/plant-registration.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

K's Devil's Due

Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner
Hybridized by: K. Hajner
Standard
From Commercial Showcase

AVSA Violet Preservation Committee Seeks to Preserve Vintage African Violets

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

The AVSA Violet Preservation Committee, chaired by Candace Baldwin, seeks to locate and preserve vintage African violets (varieties 25 or more years old) for generations of future African violet enthusiasts. Committee members are Trudy Brekel, Rich Follett, Neil Lipson, Angela Newell and Karen Willoughby. And all dedicated members/growers of the AVSA can help.

Committee History

The notion of preserving vintage African violets is by no means a new one; for many years, Barbara Elkin managed the AVSA's "Most Wanted" list in a regular column for the *AVM*. Barbara was responsible for uniting hundreds of African violet enthusiasts with hard-to-find varieties over the years, thereby helping to preserve them. When Barbara's health declined in 2006, she passed her Master List of vintage varieties and her "Most Wanted" files of collectors and growers on to Tina Moreno, who officially organized (in 2016) the AVSA Vintage Violet Committee, complete with an updated committee description in the AVSA Policies and Procedures manual.

Tina's words to her committee members, shared in a 2016 email message, read: "I want to extend my sincerest appreciation for all of you volunteering to help resurrect this committee. I think it is very important to preserve not only the vintage violets but other hard-to-find varieties, new and old, as they are all part of the AVSA heritage."

Violet Matching

Despite Tina's dedication and continued effort, the AVSA Vintage Violet Committee had not yet launched its vintage violet matching program when she decided to step down as committee chair early in 2019 and hand the reins over to Candace Baldwin. Under Candace's astute leadership and with the help of contributing committee members, the newly renamed AVSA Violet Preservation Committee (this had been one of Tina's earlier goals) is pleased to announce that an electronic vintage African violet database and request system is ready for use by AVSA members.

How To Use the Matching System

Although the process for entering collections and requesting vintage varieties still requires manual entry and maintenance at present, the committee's goal for the future is to completely automate the system. AVSA members using the service will help to refine the system and determine the need for changes to make it more user friendly. The current process is detailed below:

- AVSA members with vintage African violets to share should send an email message listing the available varieties to this email address: preservingviolets@avsa.org. Committee members will enter available varieties into a Google spreadsheet. The email also should include contact information (name, preferred email address for response).
- AVSA members seeking vintage varieties should email the same address (above) with requests. Committee members will match growers and searchers and will put them in contact with one another to make the exchange. The email also should include contact information (name, preferred email address for response).

In its inaugural phase, the Violet Preservation Committee database will be accessible only to AVSA members; in the future, access might be expanded to the general public in the interest of locating and preserving even more vintage varieties.

The preservingviolets@avsa.org email address also can be used for inquiries, comments and suggestions.

Family Portrait: *Episcia* from Belize

By Paul Kroll

5953 Broadway, No. 128 • Lancaster, NY 14086
Email: pfkroll@me.com

Episcia is one of the most common gesneriads grown by African violet exhibitors. Excellent specimens often are seen at our AVSA shows. Over my many years in this hobby, I have grown many episcias for my own enjoyment and for exhibit in AVSA and Gesneriad Society (GS) shows. My featured gesneriad for this column is an *Episcia* from Belize.

A Gifted Stolon

I was given a stolon of this plant by Ron Myhr at the GS convention in Delaware a few years ago. The stolon grew and produced three plants of proper size for potting up together. When I put them in a pot and grew them on, they grew so well and so large that I was beginning to wonder whether I had some sporting going on.

Ron Myhr is a long-time member of the GS and is the chief person responsible for the Gesneriad Reference Web, a large site where photographs and essays about various gesneriads are available at the click of your computer's mouse (accessible at https://gesneriads.info). Here is what Ron had to say about this *Episcia* that he brought home:

"Seen growing in the Belize Botanical Garden orchid house (slat-house, some protection, but open air), in 2017. It was plain bright green, no hint of bronze, large red flowers. Obtained permission to take some cuttings, and had them inspected and brought back to Canada, officially declared. Grew under lights, in the open shelf. During the winter the color changed to have a bronzy cast over the leaves, perhaps a function of cool temps, or of nutrient level. It survived a severe cold snap, when the furnace died during the coldest days of winter, other *Episcias* didn't. In the summer it gets greener, loses some of the bronze. No one knows its origin, *Episcia* is not said to be native to Belize. It seems likely to have been a form of the species *cupreata,* which is wildly variable. *Episcia* as a genus needs a thorough re-working, as there are a number of wild-collected *cupreata* forms which could be separate species. Since it is a very attractive bright green, even with the bronziness, grows easily and can be kept small or allowed to grow big, it's a good subject for just about anyone."

Episcia at the Belize Botanical Gardens. Photo by Ron Myhr.

I have included a photograph taken by Ron Myhr at the Belize Botanical Gardens where this plant was found and another of my plant just before I entered it in the Ohio State AVS show in September. The plant has now been broken down and shared with many friends.

Caring for Episcias

Episcias grow as ground covers in their native areas. That would make one think that they are low-light plants. Some of the best episcias I have seen exhibited have been grown under four tubes (T-12 or T-8), and that is where I grow mine. I place them at the side of the shelf, not directly under the tubes, but they seem to love that extra light! I use my regular potting soil and water once a week, a little bit from the top, and then fill the saucer. I do not wick water.

My *Episcia* before entering it for show last September.

I add whichever fertilizer I'm using that week, since I rotate fertilizers. The episcias with pink and white variegation do best when grown under terrarium conditions. Others grow "out" on the shelf with no extra humidity dome(s). That is the case with my plant. The rule of thumb when growing episcias is: if you want stolons, pinch off the blossoms or buds. If you want bloom, pinch off the stolons. When exhibiting episcias, it is customary to allow some stolons on the plant. Having several sets of stolon after stolon, however, does not make for a tidy exhibit.

When exhibiting episcias, it is customary to allow some stolons on the plant.

If you have not tried growing *Episcia* previously, you might wish to do so, since the plants are very compatible with African violets.

JOIN TODAY!

The African Violet Society of America

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Write or call today for information

Hosted by the Central Arkansas African Violet Society

WELCOME TO ARKANSAS!!!

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May 24–31, 2020

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Friday May 29, 9am–5pm / Saturday May 30, 9am–3pm

Little Rock Marriott Hotel • 3 Statehouse Plaza, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Annual Convention —

Luncheon Auction

By Candace Baldwin Email: aviolets@hotmail.com

Going once, going twice, sold! Those are sweet words when you've found, bid on and won that special item at the Luncheon Auction held each year at the National Convention. It all starts with generous donations from our individual members, commercial members and clubs. Donations can be a violet-related item or anything rare, unique or unusual in nature. Better yet, perhaps a starter plant (or two or three) of recent introductions or vintage plants. We'll acknowledge donors with a listing of donations and contributors on all luncheon tables.

New for the 2020 convention: we will offer a sneak preview of select auction items on the AVSA Facebook page during convention week, leading up to the luncheon on Friday. Don't miss out. Be sure to sign up to attend the Luncheon Auction when you register for convention.

In addition to donations, we need volunteers to help inventory items, be spotters during the "heat of the bidding" and provide receipts to the winning bidders. Please email me at aviolets@hotmail.com if you can volunteer to help or plan to make a donation.

If you've never been, come see what the buzz is all about. It's great fun to bid and even more fun to win, knowing with every contribution (either donation or bid), you're supporting AVSA.

AVSA 2020 Annual Convention Souvenir Book

We invite you to advertise in our Convention Souvenir Book for the 2020 AVSA Convention in Little Rock. Ads can be well wishes or advertising and help defray costs. Ads are an excellent way to promote your organization.

The maximum size of a full-page ad is 8 inches high x 5 inches wide; a half-page is 4 inches high x 5 inches wide; and a quarter-page ad is 2 inches high x 5 inches wide. The rates for the ads are: quarter-page, $30; half-page ad, $50; and a full-page ad is $90. All inside ads will be in black and white. We also offer three full-page ads placed on the inside front cover, inside back cover and outside back cover for $125, printed in black and white, or $150, printed in color. Only cover pages can be in color.

To purchase a souvenir book ad, please contact Janet Castiglione, Souvenir Book Chair, 313 Plantation Oak Avenue, Denton, TX 75065; email: jmcvioletcas@gmail.com. The deadline for all ads is April 17, 2020. Camera-ready copy is preferred (PDF, Word document or JPEG file).

Checks or money orders in U.S. dollars should be made payable to CAAVS and sent to Alice Brown, Little Rock Convention Treasurer, 65 Sunset Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Southern Food Little Rock Style

By Danny Tidwell Little Rock, Arkansas

Southern Living lists Little Rock in the "15 Southern Cities All Food Lovers Should Visit." I am sure you will agree when you sample the amazing cuisine available in and around the downtown area. Here are just a few spots that are mostly within walking distance of the convention hotel, the Little Rock Marriott (most are within three blocks). There are many more in the River Market and across the river in North Little Rock's Argenta District. Take the trolley across the river and do some exploring.

Take the trolley across the river to the historic Argenta District.

In Walking Distance

Sonny Williams' Steak Room — 500 President Clinton Ave, Suite 1. Sonny William's Steak Room offers fine beef, pork, lamb and seafood dishes. It is known for its legendary entrees, along with a vast cocktail and wine selection and delicious desserts. The restaurant has complimentary valet parking.

Samantha's Tap Room and Wood Grill — 322 Main St. Samantha's is known as upscale hop with down-home comfort. It's the only Arkansas restaurant to have all beer and wine offerings available on tap. The freshest locally grown ingredients are on hand when possible and meals are prepared over a wood fire. The award-winning restaurant offers a broad selection of appetizers, salads, sandwiches and main courses. Uniquely, all items are à la carte.

Bruno's Little Italy — 310 Main St. Bruno's offers Italian food from family recipes; they've been in Little Rock since 1949 and are our original home of Italian food.

Wasabi Sushi, Bar & Grill — 101 Main St. A taste of Japan right in Little Rock. The menu includes a wide selection of signature rolls, sushi rolls, hibachi selections, salads, soups and desserts.

David's Burgers — Downtown River Market, 400 President Clinton Ave. David's Burgers' traditional hamburger is made of high-quality beef; their fries are from hand-cut potatoes made fresh throughout the day. I rank this as probably my all-time favorite burger place with the BEST burgers ever.

Flying Fish — 511 President Clinton Ave. The Flying Fish has catfish, tilapia, shrimp and incredible hush-puppies, plus specials.

Soul Fish Café — 306 Main. Southern-good cooking including catfish and trout. And for the real Southern experience — a heaping basket of hush puppies!

Hop on the Trolley and Head Across the River

Creegan's Irish Pub — 301 Main St., North Little Rock. Fun conversation, good food, and the best spirits ...

Diamond Bear Brewing — 600 N Broadway, North Little Rock. The Arkansas Ale House is located inside Diamond Bear Brewing Company in North Little Rock. The Ale House serves beer-centric appetizers, burgers, sandwiches, soups and stews, and more, and is family friendly.

Lost Forty brewing is known for its food and craft beers.

A Little Too Far to Walk, but Worth the Drive

Cathead's Diner — 515 Shall Ave. In Little Rock's East Village, Cathead's Diner serves breakfast, brunch, lunch and dessert! Cathead's Diner is all about the flavors, fixin's, sweets and stories that get passed around a well-worn table. Its nationally acclaimed chef created a menu with smoked meats and other savory specialties, many of them served with extra-big biscuits. The sides are just as special, and dessert steals the show featuring scratch-made pies and cakes!

The Rail Yard — 1212 E. 6th St. The Rail Yard is known for great truck food, and local brews — all while soaking up the good vibes of the Arkansas outdoors, near the railroad tracks

Lost Forty Brewing — 501 Byrd St. Lost Forty boasts local craft beers. It's located moments away from the River Market Entertainment District and is an integral part of Little Rock's booming brewery scene.

Driving to Little Rock? Parking Information

For those of you driving to the Little Rock, Arkansas, convention, here is how parking will work: You will be able to receive a $6 discount on parking at the Convention District Parking Deck located at the corner of 2nd and Main Street. It's $6 off per car, per exit, per day. A map of this area will be put on the AVSA Convention website after the first of the year.

When you enter the parking deck, you will receive a parking ticket. To exit the parking deck and receive your $6 discount, you will need to show the attendant a stamped parking ticket or a stamped business card provided by AVSA at the Registration Desk. AVSA will either stamp your parking ticket or give you a stamped business card. This will alert the attendant that you are attending our AVSA Convention and received discounted parking.

Annual Convention —

Registration for Judging School for Students and Certificate Renewals

A judging school is being offered for AVSA members during the 2020 Little Rock convention. The school, taught by Barbara Werness, will be held on Wednesday, May 27, 2020. It is geared to all levels and appropriate as a first-time judging school, to qualify for a certificate renewal, or simply as an interesting class for established judges to keep judging criteria up-to-date. The school will focus on judging an AVSA show.

Class will run from 7:30 a.m. to noon, then break for lunch, with practice judging from 1 to 2 p.m. After a short break, the exam will begin at 2:30 p.m. You must attend both sessions in order to take the exam.

The exam has two parts: Complete Part 1 (50 points) at home as an open book test; you must turn it in at the beginning of the class on May 27. Part 2 (40 points) is a classroom written test, plus point scoring of two specimen African violet plants (10 points). Part 1 of the exam will be emailed to each registered student on May 6, 2020 (USPS available upon request).

You must present an AVSA membership card and judge's card (if already a judge) at the door. Proof of three blue ribbons should be presented to take the test, but exceptions to this rule can be discussed with the teacher. There are no requirements for those who wish to audit the school. All students must bring a current copy of the AVSA Handbook (13th Edition, revised May 2016) to the school.

Proof of three blue ribbons should be presented to take the test, but exceptions to this rule can be discussed with the teacher.

The $15 registration fee applies to all who attend the judging school, either to take the test or to audit the class. There is a place on the Convention Registration Form for payment. *Do not send payment to the teacher.*

Registration and payment are due by May 5, 2020. Find the Judging School registration form and information on the AVSA website (Convention tab) after January 1, 2020.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Mag's Volcanic Love

Exhibited by: Marge Farrand
Hybridized by: M. Farrand
Standard

2020 AVSA Convention Awards Convention Show Little Rock, Arkansas

By Sharon Gartner Email: svioletlady@gmail.com

Hello. I am your new Awards Chair and I just want to say "Let's Go Wild" with award donations for our Arkansas Convention!

First, I want to thank all those individuals, clubs, councils and commercial members who already have given so generously for the 2020 Convention. It is your generosity that makes the show so special and gives the winners that extra incentive to show every year. If your name, club or council are not on this list, don't worry; there is plenty of time to donate to the 2020 awards fund. Please send your check or money order to:

AVSA Office, Awards
PO Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

The final deadline to be listed in the souvenir book will be **April 11, 2020**. So, there still is plenty of time to be included in the Souvenir Convention Book.

A list of the current awards is now on the AVSA website at www.avsa.org under the Convention tab. Although we've made every attempt to list the awards correctly, mistakes happen. Please do not hesitate to contact me, Sharon Gartner, svioletlady@gmail.com. Just know, however, we reserve the right to modify or change these listings.

I also want to thank Debbie McInnis for all her help getting me set up. I have a huge learning curve but am catching on, hopefully.

Let's rock this convention with awards!!!

Specified Awards — Amateur Division

Collection

Best Holtkamp Collection, $300
Holtkamp Greenhouses, Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)

2nd Best Holtkamp Collection, $200
Holtkamp Greenhouses, Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)

3rd Best Holtkamp Collection, $100
Holtkamp Greenhouses, Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)

Best Robinson Collection, $200
The Violet Barn, Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)

Second Best Robinson Collection, $100
The Violet Barn, Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)

Best Buckeye Collection, $300
Pat Hancock (OH)

2nd Best Buckeye Collection, $200
Pat Hancock (OH)

3rd Best Buckeye Collection, $100
Pat Hancock (OH)

Best AVSA-Registered Russian Collection, $300
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

2nd Best AVSA-Registered Russian Collection, $200
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

3rd Best AVSA-Registered Russian Collection, $100
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

Best Lyndon Lyon Collection, $200
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Paul Sorano (NY)

Second Best Lyndon Lyon Collection, $100
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Paul Sorano (NY)

Best Hunter's Standard Collection, $200
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

2nd Best Hunter's Standard Collection, $75
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

Best Hunter's Mini/Semimini Collection, $200
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

2nd Best Hunter's Mini/Semimini Collection, $75
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

Best Cajun's Collection, $250
Dr. Minh Bui

Specific Variety Awards — Amateur

Horticulture

$50 Bill Foster Memorial, Bill Foster (TX)

$25 Best Jersey Snowflakes,
AVC of Morris County (NJ)

$100 Best The Alps, Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)
$100 Best Concord, Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)
$25 Best Cabbage Patch, Terri Post (IA)
$25 Best in Class Yellow Blossom/
Any Foliage, Janet Fox (CA)
$50 Best Del's Spring Blush
In memory of Del Setchel,
Violet Reflections Group (IN)
$25 Best Janet (Maas), Janet Riemer (NJ)
$50 Best Buckeye Seductress, Pat Hancock (OH)
$25 Best Aca's Libby, Bluebird Greenhouse,
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)
$25 Best LE Karusel, Starz N Streps,
Steve and Donna Turner (SC)
$50 Best Lela Marie, Early Bird Violet Club
$25 Best Lonestar Helen Mahr,
Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
$25 Best Lonestar Lady,
Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
$25 Best Lonestar Snowstorm,
Tom and Marge Savage (TX)
$25 Best Lyon's Rockin' Romance,
Cathleen Graves (WA)
$100 Best Rodeo Country,
Spring Branch AV Club (TX)
$25 Best Sailor Boy,
In Honor of Judy Carter,
Mike and Debbie McInnis (IN)
$20 Best Marching Band,
In Memory of Kent Stork
Karyn Cichocki (NJ)
$25 Best Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier,
Bluebird Greenhouse,
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)
$25 Best Semiminiature, Cathleen Graves (WA)
$25 Best Lonestar Twilight,
Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
$25 Best Everdina, AVSA
$35 Best Ozark Sinningia,
Dave's Violets, David Harris (MO)
$25 Best Other Gesneriad Fibrous Rooted in
Bloom, other than Streptocarpus/
Streptocarpella, Nancy Carr (OH)
In Memory of Richard Carr
$25 Best Tina (Maas), Janet Riemer (NJ)

Undesignated — Amateur Horticulture

$100 Mary Corondan (TX)
$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)

Specific Design Awards — Amateur Division

$35 Best Natural Garden, Janet Fox (CA)
$35 Best Dish Garden, Janet Fox (CA)
$35 Best Terrarium, Janet Fox (CA)

Undesignated — Amateur

$25 African Violet Council of
Southern California (CA)
$53 Brent T. Johnson (OH)
$15 Bonnie Harris (MN)
$25 Carol Burris (AZ)
$10 Chelsea Tidwell (AR)
$35 Dave's Violets, David Harris (MO)
$25 Danny Tidwell (AR)
$25 Delaware African Violet &
Gesneriad Society (DE)
$50 Dolores Gibbs (TX)
$100 Dr. William E. H. Price (British Columbia)
$10 Elvie Blakely (FL)
$50 Heart of Jacksonville AVS (FL)
$15 Jeffrey Smith (IN)
$25 Jo Anne (TX)
$25 Joan Wood (CA)
$19 Judith M. Carter (OK)
$25 Laura Perdomo – The Peacock Cottage (FL)
$25 Leonard Re (CA)
$50 Linda and Albert Hall (MO)
$20 Linda Scott (NM)
$20 Lola Sutherland (CA)
$275 Lone Star AV Council Convention Fund (TX)
$50 Marge & Bill Farrand (MI)
$25 Missouri Valley AV Council (SD)
$25 North Star AV Council (MN)
$100 Ohio State AVS (OH)
In Memory of Bill Foster
$25 San Diego County AVS (CA)
$50 Sharon Gartner (FL)
$25 Sherrie Wallace (OK)
$100 Tucson AVS (AZ)
$25 Tri-Counties AVS (CA)
$25 Tustana AVS (CA)

It's Time To Apply for the AVSA College Scholarship

By Charles Ramser

For more than 17 years, The AVSA has offered a college scholarship program for students — undergraduate and graduate — who are studying ornamental horticulture, floriculture, plant genetics, botany, or an equivalent program at an accredited college or university.

The award is funded through The AVSA Boyce Edens Research Fund. Depending upon fund availability at award time, one, or possibly two, students are selected annually. The award is generally offered for one academic year (two long semesters) at a time. Awardees can apply in successive years but will be in competition with new applicants.

Before applying, students normally must have completed a minimum of 24 semester or quarter hour college credits, while maintaining at least a "B" average. Awards are based upon merit.

The application form is available online at www.avsa.org/scholarships or by requesting a copy through the AVSA office in Beaumont, Texas *(see address on inside cover of this magazine.)* We also have included the form below. The completed form should be submitted via standard mail, along with an *official* transcript and two professor recommendations, to the Scholarship Selection Committee by March 1, 2020, for the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

AVSA remains dedicated to, and encourages enthusiastically, the recognition and advancement of horticultural and related study at the college level.

Here is a quote from a past recipient: *"I value everything the AVSA stands for, and I admire those who are still so passionate about floriculture. I am forever grateful for the scholarship I received last year, and I am working my hardest this year to show you that it was put to good use. I admire this organization and you support of my education."*

Send application, official transcript and two faculty recommendations to:

Dr. Charles Ramser
2413 Martin St.
Wichita Falls, TX 76308

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Return by March 1, 2020 Application Date _____ Expected Graduation Date _____

Name _____
Last First Middle Social Security Number

Address while student _____ Phone _____

Permanent Address (if different) _____

Desired Degree _____ Major _____ Minor _____

Total semester/quarter hours completed at current school as of December, 2019 _____ GPA _____

Total semester/quarter hours completed at all colleges attended as of December, 2019 _____

PLEASE ENCLOSE ONE COPY OF YOUR OFFICIAL COLLEGE TRANSCRIPT WITH THIS APPLICATION.

Cumulative GPA as of December 31, 2019 _____ (Indicate if different from 4 point system)

COMPLETE OTHER SIDE

Other schools attended:

High School _____ Date graduated _____ GPA _____

Colleges _____ GPA _____

_____ If applicable: Date graduated _____ GPA _____

List Awards and Honors you have received in college: _____

_____

List Organizations to which you belong and offices you hold (held):

_____

_____

This scholarship request applies for: (Fill in blanks with the number of hours you plan to take)

Fall 2020: _____ hrs. Spring 2021: _____ hrs.

Did you have scholarship funding during the past year? _____ If yes, name the scholarships and show amount: _____

In this space, in a succinct paragraph, describe your CAREER PLANS, as you foresee them:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe briefly your employment history, whether related to horticulture or not:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe why this merit scholarship from AVSA would be uniquely meaningful to you.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Faculty to serve as References: (Select 2)	NAME	POSITION	ADDRESS	PHONE

Send completed application to: **Dr. Charles Ramser**
2413 Martin Street
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Ph. 940-397-4362

Signature _____

Your E-mail Address: _____

Article Contest Update

By Pat Hancock

Congratulations to the winner of the November/December *AVM* article contest. Bill Chaney of La Pine, Oregon, won for his article "Pesticides: Understanding the Available Tools," which appeared on page 36 of the November issue. He will receive new semimini leaves and is entered in the end-of-year contest for leaves and other great prizes. Thanks again to Sue Hoffmann and her committee for judging the excellent articles in the November issue.

The prizes keep coming for our upcoming issue (a vintage), and we will choose our annual winner following publication of the May/June issue.

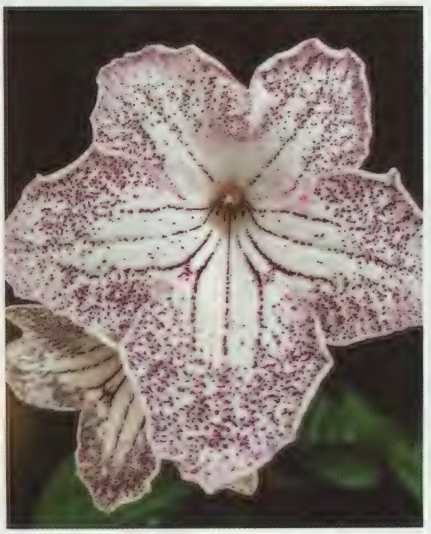
The upcoming issue deadlines are the week of January 1 (for the March/April issue) and March 1 for the May issue. We welcome articles about growing and showing African violets and gesneriads, and have a few writing queues in our contest guidelines if you need ideas.

Be sure to mark your article "Contest Entry" and send it to the editor by the issue's deadline. Learn more about the contest and guidelines for writing and submitting articles to *AVM* on the magazine's webpage (www.avsa.org/magazine) or by contacting the editor (editor@avsa.org).

Special thanks to all who entered. I also want to thank all the generous hybridizers who contribute new introduction leaves for our contest. We've got photos of some of their plants to the right and on the next page, just to give you an idea of the quality and variety of leaves you could be eligible to win! We are excited about the excellent articles we are receiving, so keep them coming.

New introductions from Paul Sorano at Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses.

New introductions from Pat Hancock at Buckeye Violets.



Examples of new strep seedlings from Steve Covolo of Steffano's Streps.

Examples of new introductions from Kathy Hajner of Hajner Hybrids.

Rooting Crowns

By Will Key Salado, Texas

Early in May 2019, a neighbor brought me an overgrown NOID (no identification) African violet because it wouldn't bloom. It was in a round 4-inch plastic pot, probably from a mass market grower. The plant was about 6 inches in diameter and had chosen to reproduce vegeta-tively instead of blooming. It had many more leaves than it should. I watered it and allowed it to get used to my environment.

Rooting Process

After a few days, I began the following process:

Examination. I unpotted the plant and shook loose the crumbly top and sides of the mostly peat potting medium. I examined the plant and found that it had two additional crowns growing from the side. I removed these very carefully and set them aside.

Cleaning up. I removed only two or three additional unneeded leaves, scraped the bare trunk and sliced nearly one-half inch off the bottom of the root ball. I used a serrated steak knife I've dedicated for those tasks, which I clean with isopropyl alcohol.

Repotting. I repotted the main plant into a 3-inch plastic pot, watered it and set it in a low- to medium-lighted area away from my own plants.

Six-inch Styrofoam bowl.

Remaining crowns. The remaining crowns (or suckers) presented a new challenge for me, since I had never tried to root a 6-inch crown before. Fortunately, I had a Styrofoam 6-inch shallow bowl at hand. I had purchased the bowls for a previous experiment that did not work out.

> ... I found very healthy root systems under each of the suckers.

Planting the crowns. I settled each crown into a bowl and it was a good fit. I added just about a quarter of an inch of water and covered the bowl with plastic wrap. It is important that the water level be enough to grow roots but not to let the actual crown sit in water, or it might rot.

The plastic wrap I used was very clear. The more light the leaves receive, the more they can get better, as long as the light does not burn them.

Crown settled into the Styrofoam bowl.

Bowling the crowns. I was about to tape the edges under when I was inspired to fold the edges under the bowl containing the crown and then set the bowl inside a second bowl. This saved tape and made it a snap to check on things while the plant developed a root system. I "bowled" both crowns and moved them to a good location.

Lighting. Time passed and the main plant recovered. I anticipated that my neighbor probably would not have the lighting setup I use so I set her plant where it could get good indirect light from a window.

Success

By the middle of June, when I opened my "crown bowls," I found very healthy root systems under each of the suckers. The roots had grown out to the edges and started up the sides of the bowls. I probably should have checked them a week or two sooner.

One of the suckers with a healthy root system.

I potted up each of the suckers into 2.5-inch plastic pots and watered them in. To return the plants to the plastic wrap dome, I draped the plastic over each, tucked under the edges, and placed the entire thing in a small 4-inch plastic bowl.

A potted and domed sucker.

Pretty blooms on the original plant.

Only 5 or 6 weeks after I started, the original plant had begun blooming. It has rather nice little blooms! It looks like Rhapsodie Susi (AVSA #6620) but of course, it's still a NOID.

Shows and Judges Committee

By Mary J. Corondan, Chair

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

Although I have written several articles for the Shows and Judges column, this is the first one I have written as the Chair. Thank you for your support as I fill the position of a knowledgeable violet grower and dear friend, Bill Foster.

Handbook Update

The Shows and Judges Committee will be issuing a 75th Anniversary Edition of *The AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges* at the AVSA Convention in 2021 in Atlanta. This will be a special tribute to the history of AVSA. Since the new Handbook will not be issued until then, an expanded list of Handbook updates will be posted on the Shows and Judges page under the "Members Only" section of the AVSA website. The list will give all the updated Handbook verbiage found in the *African Violet Magazine* rather than just the issue, page number, and subject matter. This will help new members who do not have access to back issues of the magazine and would like to attend a judging school.

Teaching Tools

Judging school teachers will notice a new edition of Teaching Tools has been posted on the AVSA website in the "members only" section under Shows and Judges. There are no major changes. The new edition merely brings the document up to date with current practices. A special thanks is in order to Winston Goretsky for his contribution in this area.

The Shows and Judges Committee will be issuing a 75th Anniversary Edition of The AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges ...

Russian/Ukrainian Classes

The Russian/Ukrainian Collection classes at the AVSA Show in Little Rock will be expanded. There will be one class for a Russian/Ukrainian Collection of standard African violets and another class for a Russian/Ukrainian Collection of miniature/semiminiature African violets. In these two collection classes only, the violets will **not** need to be AVSA registered. This should help provide more entries in these classes and promote African violets on the international level.

Enjoy your violets during the winter months and prepare them for upcoming spring shows.

Contest Entry —

My Collection

By Kate Brown Madison, Indiana

I have been growing these three violets (see photo) since April 2015. I have repotted them once. They live near a western window and I forget to water them on occasion. As you can see, I water them from the bottom up (with bottled water). I use this special pan just for them.

Bottom watering my three violets.

My aunt who lived in Evanston, Illinois, had African violets. She had one of those growing stations with the lamps attached in her living room. That was circa 1959. As you can see, I have not gotten too carried away. I am a subscriber to *African Violet Magazine* and am in awe when I read about the shows and collections, and about how people came to be so passionate about this hobby.

This is where my plants live in the corner of my dining room.

I talk to my plants and tell them how beautiful they are. I am grateful.

Thrips — It's Always Plural

By Jenny Enchayan Holdrege, Nebraska

Email: Jenny.enchayan@gmail.com

Thrips: A common enemy of the African violet grower. Thrips rarely are found alone, much like in grammar, where the term thrips always is plural. Where there is one thrips, there are likely multiple thrips.

There are about 6,000 different species of thrips, and not all species of thrips are the evil insect that growers encounter in their plant collections. Some are even predatory! However, when African violet growers encounter the presence of spilled pollen or silvery leaves, it is likely they are dealing with the western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*.

Spilled pollen on an African violet flower.

Signs of Thrips

A classic, first noticeable symptom of thrips is spilled pollen on the flower petals, but flowers desiccating or drying out early also can indicate thrips. Thrips, especially nymphs, also feed on the leaves of the African violets. Leaves might take on a silvery sheen, appear rough or no longer uniform, and change color. Individual thrips also can be seen on the upper surface of leaves.

Thrips on the surface of African violet leaves.

Identifying Thrips

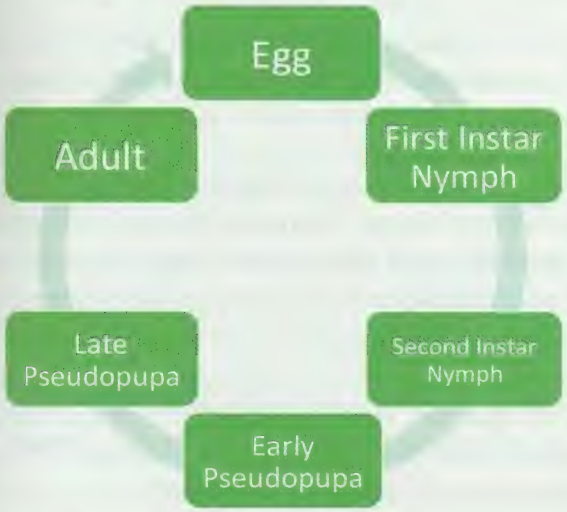
In African violets, thrips are one of several of the so-called "creepy crawly creatures" found in collections. It's very important to properly identify creepy crawlies. Misidentifying and then treating a misidentified arthropod leads to a loss of plant material, health, time and finances. Thrips are classified as the order Thysanoptera, which means fringed wings. Although nymphs do not have wings, most adults do.

Identifying a thin, feathery-looking wing means you've encountered thrips. Thrips also are characterized by an elongated body. They typically look light yellow, cream or whitish in color when on African

violets. However, other species of thrips are a variety of colors. Color is helpful when identifying thrips but should not be used as the only characteristic.

Thrips Life Cycle

The thrips life cycle currently is identified as a gradual metamorphosis. This means thrips have an egg, nymph and adult stage. It's different than a butterfly or beetle with a complete metamorphosis where the insect passes through the egg, larva and pupa before transforming into an adult.



Thrips life cycle.

In the hierarchy of the Insecta Class, the thrips order currently is classified between the insects with gradual metamorphosis and complete metamorphosis. As they go through their life cycle, the final instar is immobile but not a true pupa. This part of the life cycle often is described when growers treating African violets refer to thrips being in the soil media of their plants and why a particular one-time treatment will not eliminate all thrips.

Integrated pest management steps.

IPM and Treatment

When combating thrips, it's important not to spray and pray. Integrated pest management (IPM) is an encouraged methodology effective for many pests and diseases, including thrips. The basic steps for IPM are outlined in the graph above. Many pesticides are available to suppress and kill thrips populations.

When using any pesticide, it is important to always follow label instructions, including application amounts. A high concentration will not be more effective, and a lower concentration will not save you money. Both will only lead to increased resistance of the thrips to the pesticide and further hurt your efforts to treat your collection and the collections of your fellow African violet growers.

Editor's note: Jenny has a master's degree in entomology. She is a commercial member of AVSA and the owner of Violets and More, LLC. All graphics and photos in this article are courtesy of the author.

In Memory

Bill Foster

Bill Foster of Mesquite, Texas, passed away on September 24, 2019, and was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Paula. Bill was 85 years old and was a member of the First Nighter African Violet Society, Alpha African Violet Society, North Texas African Violet Judges' Council, Lone Star African Violet Council, and AVSA. He served in various officer capacities and frequently presented programs for these organizations throughout the years.

Bill grew up in the country; he was fond of horses and enjoyed woodworking. After being a high school honor student, he decided upon a career in accounting and worked in that capacity for the oil industry. He retired at age 50 so he could spend more time with his violets.

His interest in violets began when he was in his thirties when he was given one as a gift. His wife, Paula, bought him a four-foot light fixture with grow bulbs, and together they would visit Volkmann's Greenhouse and June Swift's violet shop in Dallas exploring future purchases.

Bill served AVSA as President from 1999-2001 and Shows and Judges Chair since 1990. He was installed as AVSA President in Houston in 1999 and the last AVSA Convention he attended was in Houston in 2019. In 1988, he was AVSA Convention Chair in Dallas. Bill was an AVSA Master Judge and a Teacher. He received his first AVSA Society Award in 1989, which was an Honorary One Year Membership.

Bill was very proud when he was appointed as an Admiral of the Great Navy of Nebraska and received a certificate signed and sealed by Governor Mike Johnson in 2000 at the AVSA Omaha convention. In 2001, he was presented with an Honorary Life Certificate followed by the Distinguished Service Award in 2004. He was inducted into the AVSA Hall of Fame in 2010 and considered this to be the greatest honor he had ever received. In addition, he received the Bronze Medal for Horticultural Achievement in 2012.

Although Bill held many leadership positions, he also enjoyed hybridizing. Among his African violet hybrids are Bertha, Billy Blue, Sweet Paula, Merrill, and Marjorie's Melody. Bertha was a top Best in Show winner for two years.

Bill will be greatly missed by the violet community on the local, state and national level. He has influenced many lives with his passion for violets.

Judy Millstone

Judith Millstone passed away September 28, 2019. Judy had been ill and hospitalized for the month of September. She had multiple sclerosis, an autoimmune disease, which made it difficult for her body to heal.

Judy had been a resident of Tucson, Arizona, since 1968 when her family moved there from Rochester, New York. With her parents (Dave and Edith) committed to the move, Judy flew to Tucson to check out the university. When she got off the plane, she looked around and said she would never leave.

Judy graduated from the University of Arizona in 1972. She taught fifth grade for about seven years in Safford, Arizona. While in Safford, she obtained a master's degree in counseling and returned to Tucson. Unable to find a teaching job, she decided to enter real estate sales. Her brother Robert and father, Dave, both were brokers in Tucson.

To maintain her teaching credentials, Judy took a computer programming class and fell in love with programming (a job in computers had been suggested to her in high school but she had decided

against it). She went on to earn two degrees in programming, working as a programmer for the City of Tucson until retiring in 2004.

Judy was a member of Congregation Or Chadash and before that, Temple Emanu-El in Tucson. Her passions included poodles, African violets, and pandas. She and her husband, Ed Jackson, had three miniature poodles. Judy was an active long-time member of the Tucson African Violet Society and African Violet Society of America.

Edna Rourke

On November 4, 2019, AVSA lost a valuable, well-known member. Many years ago, Edna's mother-in-law gave her an African violet. She was thrilled that it survived and her love for African violets began.

Soon after this introduction, Edna joined the Naugatonic and then Nutmeg State African Violet Societies in her home state of Connecticut. Over the years, she held just about every office, chaired and staged more than 30 shows, and performed every task from show chair to president. Edna was a member of the Mid-Atlantic and Dixie regional societies plus several affiliate clubs in neighboring states. She joined AVSA in 1976.

Her first major role for AVSA was show/staging co-chair for the Boston convention in 1990. It was a labor of love and ignited her desire to become more involved. In 1999, Edna became an AVSA director and applied her energies to fundraising. She helped develop the current Luncheon Auction. In 2000, Edna added a silent auction. Many people donated related items, plants and new hybrids. It took off! Thanks to Edna's hard work and dedication, the auction became one of the highest grossing fundraisers for AVSA. She also was responsible for acquiring a sizable grant from the Allegretti Foundation due to friendships she developed while working on the auction.

Edna was a dedicated volunteer, club member and promoter in the African violet world. She was an AVSA life member, a master judge and a revered design judge who gave design workshops at several AVSA conventions. She wrote articles on the Art of Design and Judging Design that won awards in the AVSA Best Article contests. Edna served as AVSA Treasurer and 3rd Vice-President, as well a running the Luncheon Auction each year at the national convention since 1998. In 2004, Edna received an Honorary One-Year AVSA Membership award and she was presented with the Continuing Service Award in 2008.

She is survived by her husband, Al, and two sons James and Tom, along with their wives. Edna will be greatly missed by many.

Rosemary White

Rosemary White of Willoughby Hills, Ohio, passed away on September 19, 2019. She was 83 years old and a member of North Coast Gesneriad and African Violet Club.

Rosemary was a long-time member of Town & Country African Violet Club in Painesville, Parmatown Violet Club in Parma, and other local flower clubs. Rosemary grew African violets for more than 40 years. Her specialty was Underwater Designs, for which she won many rosettes.

Rosemary was a very kind woman who enjoyed attending the meetings and sharing her underwater design tips. She will be missed by fellow club members.

North Coast Gesneriad & African Violet club is donating $50 in memory of Rosemary White to be used for an award for best underwater display.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Fun Trail

Exhibited by: Sam Cunningham
Hybridized by: H.Pittman
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Jolly Mimi

Exhibited by: Randy Deutsch
Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Nautilocalyx species

Best Other
Gesneriad - Commercial
Exhibited by: Kathryn Spissman

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Skärt Litet Möln

Exhibited by: Glenda Williams
Hybridized by: I. Lindskog
Miniature Trailer

Contest Entry —

New Life for a Once-Defunct Club

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

The Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society in Strasburg, Virginia, has experienced a resurgence thanks to some dedicated former members and a new home at a local garden shop. The Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society was an active AVSA affiliate club from 2002 to 2009, when some of its senior members retired to other areas, relocated for family support, or experienced declining health that made it impossible for them to continue attending. With a sad sigh, the club disbanded late in 2009.

A New Home

The Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society remained completely inactive until fall 2019, when two of its previous members approached me (former club president) and expressed an interest in becoming active again. Inquiries followed and the stars aligned. The club found a new home from Janet Heishman, owner of Pot Town Organics (Strasburg used to be called "Pot Town" because it was a prominent center for potters, who created beautiful stoneware from the local clay in the 1800s). Janet offered to host the club on the third Sunday of each month from September through May. Her offer was particularly generous since her business normally is closed on Sundays.

Pot Town Organics, home for our rejuvenated club. Photo by Mary Ruth Alred Follett.

> ... it won't be long until the Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society is in full bloom again.

Janet also advertised the revitalized club through social media and a physical sign-up sheet in her shop. Meanwhile, I got to work contacting former members still in the area and following up on email messages I had received in the interim asking about the dormant club.

Our First Meetings

We held our first meeting on September 15, 2019. I presented a dual program on the club's history and grooming neglected windowsill violets, which are common in this picture-postcard southern mountain town. The reunion was joyful; three former club members were present, along with four new members and Pot Town Organics proprietor Janet Heishman. Everyone was so excited that no one thought to take a group picture!

By the second meeting (pictured on next page) the photo finally happened. Two of the former club

members were traveling and could not attend but have promised to return, and four new members arrived. The program for the second meeting, most appropriately, was on putting down leaves to root.

With 11 excited members already in the rolls, there is a clear growth curve happening now, and it won't be long until the Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society is in full bloom again.

For more information about the Shenandoah Saintpaulia Society, contact club president Rich Follett at richfoll@yahoo.com.

Group photo from our second meeting, including Janet Heishman (lower right, front).

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received from September through October 2019 Total $1,245

Geneva — $100-$499

Mary Corondan
In memory of Bill Foster
Melanie Eubanks
In memory of Bill Foster
Quad Cities AVS
In memory of Bill Foster
Sue Ramser
In memory of Bill Foster
Marge and Tom Savage
In memory of Bill Foster

Multicolor — $50-$99

First AVS of Denton
In memory of Katherine Perry
First AVS of Wichita Falls
In memory of Bill Foster
Linda and Albert Hall
In memory of Bill Foster
Susan Hill
Missouri Valley AVC
In memory of Bill Foster
Ohio State AVS
In memory of Georgene Albrecht

Multicolor (continued)

Ohio State AVS
In memory of Bill Foster
Richmond AVS
In memory of Peggy Coley

Two-tone — $25-$49

Pamela Brown
Sue Ramser
In memory of Georgene Albrecht
Sue Ramser
In memory of Dr. Jackie Horton Parker
San Diego County AVS
In memory of Jeanne Cross
Southern New Jersey AVC
In lieu of speaker's fee for Karyn Cichocki
Wichita AV Study Club

Thumbprint — Under $25

Kim Beckley
Joanne D'Angelo
Gail Podany

Dr. Minh Bui: New to the AVSA Family

By Paul Kroll

I first met Minh Bui at the AVSA-AVSC Convention in Buffalo, New York. I was pleased to get to know him better as I interviewed him at the Houston convention a year later. Since that time, we have been in contact by email so I could clarify and expand the information in this article. What a pleasure to have "young blood" like Minh entering our hobby!

About Minh

Minh is Vietnamese by birth. His father fought alongside American troops during the Vietnam war. After the war, his parents left for a refugee camp in Indonesia, where he was born. After a year's time, his parents were accepted to the United States and the family immigrated to the Washington, DC, area. Minh has lived in this area since 1983.

Dr. Minh Bui. Photo by Paul Kroll.

Growing plants has been a lifelong interest of Minh's. When asked what type of plants he grows, he replied, "Green ones"! He has a photo of himself at four years old holding a squash. African violets have been an interest of his since 2017 and he has grown gesneriads since 2018. Only recently has Minh taken an interest in miniature and semi-miniature African violets, as standard-sized plants were his first choice.

Minh's doctorate is in plant genetics with a focus on flower development and plant hormone response.

Minh's doctorate is in plant genetics with a focus on flower development and plant hormone response. He was recruited to the National Institutes of Health immediately after college graduation to do cancer research. Minh currently is a senior research scientist focusing on glioblastomas/brain, cervical and colorectal cancers.

A Growing Hobby

Minh's 1,300 square-foot home is being overrun with plants and lights. He grows almost exclusively with T5 HO lights. Although many in our hobby insist that African violets cannot be grown this way, Minh has recently won two horticulture sweepstakes in competitive shows, refuting that idea. He is slated to be one of the presenters at the upcoming 2020 AVSA convention in Little Rock on this very subject.

As for a growing medium, Minh chooses to use Miracle-Gro potting mix. He bakes the mix to sterilize

it and then mixes it with at least 50 percent coarse perlite. Once this mix is completely cool, he adds in mycorrhizae.

All of Minh's African violet growing areas are extremely sophisticated in that they are equipped with air conditioning units that are connected to a smart outlet, allowing him to control them from anywhere in the world! His light stands also are on smart outlets, which allow the same type of remote management. The rooms also have SensorPush monitors that monitor the growing environment and notify him when temperatures and humidity deviate from the set ranges. Remote activation via the Nest Temperature Sensor is possible from anywhere in the world. He also has cameras that videotape his grow rooms while he is away from home. Amazing!

Ma's Paris Affair and Bob Serbin were the first two standard plants Minh grew, and he grows them still. Those two and many others continue to thrive and win blue ribbons for this young, enthusiastic and tech-savvy hobbyist. We all can look forward to learning more and meeting Minh at the Little Rock convention in May 2020.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Cajun's Party Favor

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Standard

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19-101

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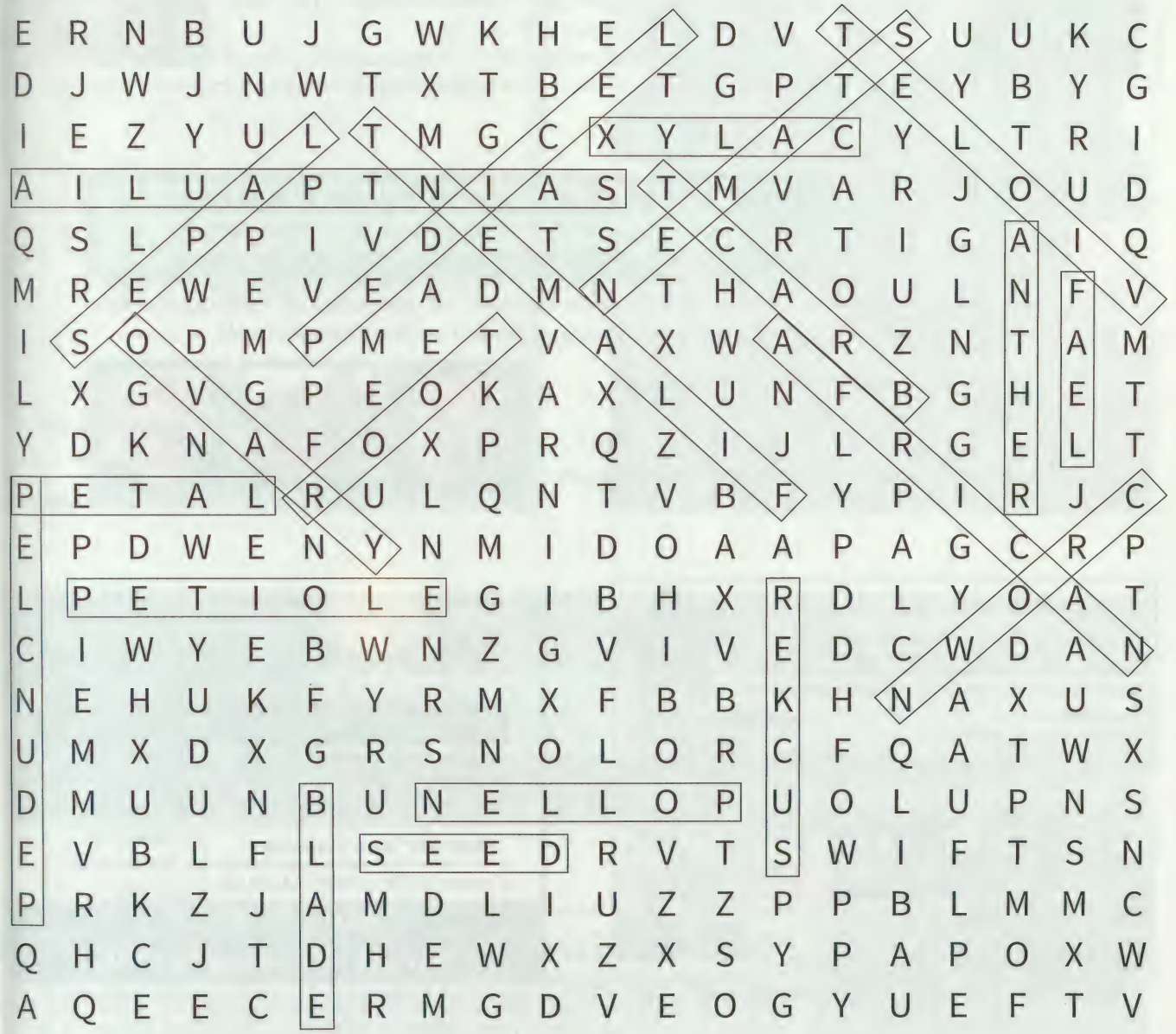
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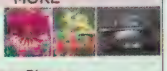

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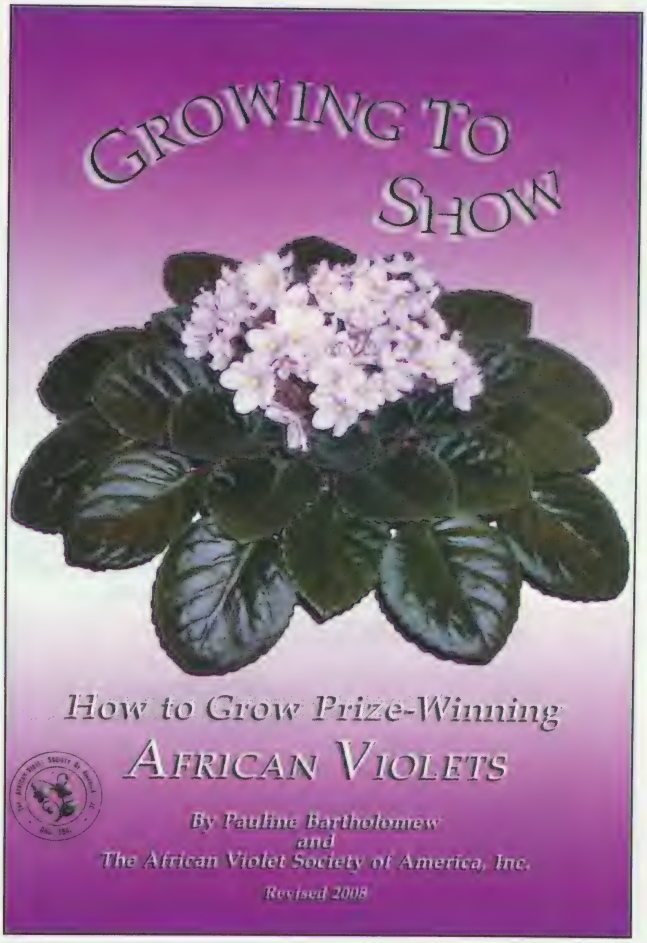

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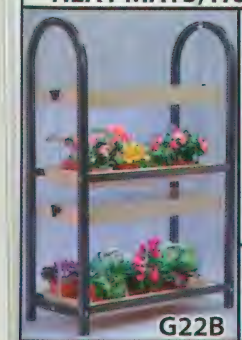

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FEATURES

Grooming the Minis—Debbie McInnis 10
Thank You for Your Support!—Randy Deutsch 14
Meredith Hall: Making Violet Shows Better—Joyce Stork 16
A Violet Plague—Josh McKinney 26
Vintage Violet Preserved in Art—Pamela Mason 31
An Ounce of Prevention Is ... the Key to Healthy Plants!—Bill Chaney 36
Bring New Life to Club Programs—Cristy Boothe 46
Fun With Leaf Bingo—Dale Martens 47
What's in Your Soil Mix?—Karyn Cichocki 48
A Swift Return—Teresa Odle 52
Article Contest Update 54
Ruth Beck's 100th Birthday 54
It's Really "Elemental"—Dr. Jeff Smith 56
African Violet Terms: Growing and Showing 60

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Buckeye Blue Indigo—Wayne Geeslin 5
Thunder Surprise—Debbie McInnis 9
Petite Blarney—Diane Miller 15
Imp's Billowing Cloak—Beverley Williams 15
Optimara Rose Quartz—Sandra Skalski 25
EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia—Richard Nicholas 28
Hunter's Sweet Emotion—Ken Muzalewski 35
Design: Margaritas—Linda Sumski 50
Design: Technology—Paul Kroll 50
Design: Treasures of the Gulf—Fran Russom 51
Design: Winged Jewels—Judith Carter 51
***Streptocarpus* 'Heartland's White Gold'**—Mary McFarland 55
***Streptocarpus* 'Ladyslipper Blue Ice'**—Richard Nicholas 55
Mag's Cher Amour—Marge Farrand 58
Nancy Demers—Wilhelmina Allen 59
Jersey Snow Flakes—Kathy Hajner 61

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser 3
Editor's Notes—Teresa Odle 4
My First Violets—Sandra Skalski 6
Board of Directors Nominations for 2020 12
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 18
Coming Events 20
In Memory 29
Booster Fund—Dianna Walston 30
Registration Report—Joe Bruns 30
Family Portrait—Mel Grice 32
Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 33
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 34
Tally Time 2019—Susan Anderson 44

CONVENTION

Welcome to Arkansas! 39
Go Hog Wild: Convention Tours 40
Are You Ready Yet: First-timers—Candace Baldwin 41
Come for Fun, Stay to Learn: Presentations 42
Luncheon Auction—Candace Baldwin 43
2020 Convention Awards—Sharon Gartner 43

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Index Of Advertisers

African Rainforest Conservancy 63
Amazon Smile—AVSA ..... Inside Back Cover
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AVS of Canada 62
AVSA Drinkware 24
Cryptanthus Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 62
Gesneriad Society 63
Glenda's House of Violets 62
Growing to Show—AVSA 63
Hobby Greenhouse ..... Inside Back Cover
Indoor Gardening Supplies 63
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery 64
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 62
Oyama Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 64
Physan 20 64
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Supply 62

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

As I write this, winter still has its grip on parts of the country. The cold weather does not help our violets and gesneriads think about spring and spring shows. In other areas, "spring has sprung" and plants are beginning to perform in anticipation of spring shows. We hope that your plants are beginning to perform for you. Give them a little extra tender loving care to encourage them to come into bloom and be up to their best potential for your upcoming shows.

Speaking of upcoming shows, soon it will be time for our Little Rock Convention and Show. Registration is open and we encourage you to make your hotel reservations and register during the "early bird" registration time frame. Our Little Rock hosts have great things planned for us — great presentations, great tours and activities we know you will enjoy. Read more about the convention program and details beginning on page 39. Also, think about an item or items you would like to donate to the auction held during our Auction Luncheon. This event has brought some unusual offerings in the past and has provided an important revenue stream for AVSA. We also need volunteers to help before, during and after the auction. Contact Candace Baldwin to volunteer.

Office Update

The AVSA Office is beginning to resume regular business hours and will be back to normal day-to-day operations soon. Amy Carruth and others have gone above and beyond the "call of duty" to make this happen. Thank you, Amy, for all you do for AVSA and thank you to our other team members who are making this happen.

Thank you to our generous individual and affiliate members for donating to the Office Disaster Appeal announced in the January/February *AVM*. Again, you, our members, have come to our rescue! We thank you and appreciate all your help during this time. We received a generous donation from David Burde in memory of his late wife, Barbara, that helped us reach our goal. We thank David for helping us continue to remember Barbara's love for AVSA.

Future Conventions

Your AVSA Executive Committee would like to announce that our 75th Anniversary Convention and Show will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. A contract has been signed with the hotel. Save the dates of May 30 to June 6, 2021; plan to attend and help AVSA celebrate our 75th Anniversary. We're planning many memorable events for this celebration. More details will follow as the date draws near.

Kathy Lahti and her Convention Committee are always searching for areas of the country to host conventions. If your affiliate would be interested in hosting a convention, please contact Kathy Lahti or me; Kathy and her committee will pursue local properties. We enjoy visiting different areas of the country. Yours might be the next place we visit.

Membership

Membership is a growing concern to AVSA and to local affiliates. We encourage you to reach out to us with your suggestions of ways that AVSA can increase our membership and how your local affiliate has succeeded in adding members. One of our goals is to increase membership through individual, affiliate, and international members and to retain the members we have. We always welcome your suggestions of what works and what does not work for you in your membership recruitment.

Please remember, through our continuing two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Editor's Notes

By Teresa Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

Remember the first time you exhibited an African violet in a show? Or maybe the first time you shared photos, questions or tips on social media? Did you hesitate and worry whether you were doing everything perfectly or did you jump right in? And after it was over, were you glad you took the leap, even proud of the results? Writing sparks similar fear and hesitation.

Overcome Fears

I think the reasons people say they "can't write" or "hate to write" are as individual as, well, the individuals. A common reason is fear of failure. Over the years, I've talked with plenty of people who wanted to write for a living. I've also edited articles from "non-writers," including people with advanced medical or technical degrees. I can recall few times I saw any of those people fail or have their work rejected outright. Those few instances related to plagiarism, which is a huge problem, and to poor research methodology.

Structure Your Ideas

It's easy to avoid plagiarism — don't copy and paste others' work, no matter where you find it. Methodology, a fancy word for planning and structure, might not seem as critical in *AVM* as in a peer-reviewed journal, but it improves your writing. A systematic approach helps you gather thoughts, write with better flow and ensure that readers have one or more takeaways. Here is an abbreviated version of how to structure an article about a situation or problem (link to full guidelines at avsa.org/magazine):

1. Note a situation or problem.
2. Define the problem.
3. Present the scope of the problem with some specifics.
4. Provide sound, relevant information toward a solution.
5. Explain the steps used (or to use) as a takeaway for readers.
6. Implement the solution or past steps taken as examples.
7. Describe and monitor the results and report on success or failures.
8. Share the lessons learned and what could have improved the outcome.
9. Be objective, but also state this is "my" approach or journey; express openness to other solutions.

Take the Leap

Every reader of *AVM* has unique experiences, problems, solutions or ideas. We love when you share them. The best way to take the leap from thinking about a problem to writing about it is to avoid stressing over the process. We want ideas more than we want perfect prose.

This issue illustrates the variety of ideas and solutions readers can share. We have articles on grooming minis, local club programs, pest prevention, soil mixes, violet-related hobbies, AVSA leaders and even a "plague" upon a violet collection.

So, please don't stress about whether you have perfect grammar or writing skills, or whether you can use a computer (mail an article if necessary; see my address on the inside cover). Take the leap and let an editor be your parachute.

My job is to guide you through the process and make the article better, clearer and more helpful to readers. That is what I love to do, and I've surely enjoyed working with everyone who has submitted an article in the past year.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Buckeye Blue Indigo

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin
Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Standard

My First Violets: Keeping a Collection Healthy

By Sandra Skalski Mullica Hill, New Jersey

Email: sskalski@comcast.net

You've fussed over your plants and they've bloomed and grown for you, but one day they don't look quite right. Perhaps the center leaves are small and hard, or the plants are limp, even though the soil is moist. And was that a critter that just scampered across a dusty-looking blossom? One of the most discouraging things new growers face is an invasion of pests or disease. If this has happened to you, you are not alone.

There are two kinds of African violet growers: those who have had pest or disease problems, and those who **will** have them. It's virtually impossible to avoid having an occasional problem. However, what separates the successful growers from the ones constantly plagued by issues are some simple guidelines for good growing. Keeping your plants healthy should be the top priority for every grower.

Start with Healthy Plants

A healthy collection starts with healthy African violets. There are many reputable sources for beautiful, healthy plants, including our AVSA Commercial Members. Some of our hobby growers sell beautiful plants on eBay or social media. Get recommendations from other growers. Be careful when purchasing plants that are grown near outdoor plants or cut flowers. They might be more susceptible to picking up stray pests simply by their location.

Wherever you choose to get your plants, they should be healthy from the start. Of course, even healthy-looking plants could be harboring pests or diseases, but adopting sickly plants is a recipe for disaster. Some people like to "rescue" ailing plants from stores or from friends. Resist the urge to do this. Although the upside might be that you save a plant or two, the downside is that you might bring pests or diseases into your collection.

Keeping your plants healthy should be the top priority for every grower.

Once you get new plants or leaves, be sure to inspect them thoroughly. Discard the blossoms. Yes, I know that's why you grow them, but blossoms can harbor thrips, one of the worst African violet pests. Repot them into your own growing mix and then put them in quarantine. You can use clear plastic containers, empty lettuce bins or large Ziploc bags. Keep them in a different location from your main collection and observe them carefully. Isolate the plants until you are sure they are healthy.

The length of time you isolate depends on several factors, including where you got the plants. If it's a new source, you should isolate longer, but always isolate for at least 4 months. The length of isolation also depends on how large of a collection you already have. How many other plants are at risk? I have a large collection, so new plants go into isolation for 6 months to a year. Yes, I said a year. My collection is at capacity so new plants replace older varieties. If the plants are from a known source, they might be in isolation for only 6 months. However, I just discarded a plant I had isolated for more than a year. It was a variety I was excited to obtain, but despite several times repotting the plant, it never looked quite right. If new plants don't look good despite your best care, toss them. After all, that is the reason we isolate them in the first place.

Consider Collection Size

Consider the size of your collection when aiming to keep all your plants healthy. How many plants are you growing? Many new growers jump into African violets with both feet. They get plants from everywhere and quickly acquire all the latest varieties. I admire their enthusiasm, but are their collections growing faster than their growing skills? Ask yourself whether you have the time to water and groom all of your plants once a week. If not, your collection might have exceeded your current ability to care for them. It's easy to get overwhelmed by an expanding collection. A dozen plants you can care for will bring you more joy than 100 neglected ones. When you get the itch for more, focus on acquiring more knowledge instead of more plants.

Prevent Pests

If you are like me, you also have an outdoor garden. Your outside garden usually has a balance of pest and predator critters, but your inside garden is an artificial environment. Insect pests won't have any natural predators if they invade your indoor garden. Don't risk introducing an outdoor pest into your violet collection. Shower and change your clothes after working outside before you go near your violet area. Keep in mind that pets can bring in pests on their fur, and small pests like thrips can slip through most screens. If you enjoy cut flowers, keep them far away from your violet collection.

Time spent with your plants is one of your best defenses against pests and diseases. Spend time each week watering and grooming your plants. Buy a lighted magnifying glass and thoroughly check your plants. Look for trouble signs like spilled pollen (possible thrips infestation), tight, hairy centers (possible mites), mushy leaves (fungus or bacterial infection), or floating white masses in the water reservoir (soil mealy bugs). Hang yellow sticky cards on your plant shelves or growing area and inspect them for critters weekly. The sticky cards don't prevent infestations; they are your early warning system. You should inspect them for pests, or they won't do you any good.

Solve Problems Right Away

So, what do you do if a problem shows up? The most important thing you can do is to act quickly, before the problem gets worse. Identify the problem, and then form your action plan. However, for treatment to be effective, you need an accurate diagnosis. New growers sometimes are quick to pick up a bottle and try to spray a problem away, but is this a cultural problem or a pest/disease problem? Random spraying "just in case" is not recommended. But how do you figure out what's wrong with your plants?

When you get the itch for more, focus on acquiring more knowledge instead of more plants.

Learn and Get Help

Fortunately, there are many good sources of information. The very best source is AVSA. The pages of this magazine are filled with terrific articles describing most of the problems violet growers face and what to do about them. One of the best ways to find help, as well as the camaraderie of people who share your love of African violets, is to join a local club or affiliate.

There also are good sources on the Internet and on social media. Many growers try to get a diagnosis from social media or other remote sources. There is nothing wrong with trying, but you should realize that random people on the Internet, even experienced growers, might not have the right experience or training, and cannot diagnose your plants using photos alone. They only can tell you what it **might be**, since many ailments have similar symptoms. However, you have access to more information than you realize.

Be Observant

First, what have you observed? List the symptoms the plants are displaying. Next, ask yourself some basic questions:

- When did the symptoms start?
- Did something change in the plant's environment?
- Is it in one or two plants, or the entire collection?
- Did you repot using a new soil mix?

•Did you change the water or fertilizer?
•Did you add new plants to the collection?
•Did the seasons change?
•Did you change light fixtures or light hours?
•Are there any insects visible?

Unhealthy-looking centers are one of the most common problems I see posts about on social media. Often, growers diagnose the problem as mites. Small, inexpensive digital or handheld microscopes are available that can help you find and identify insect or mite pests. Mites are small, but they are not invisible. So, if your plants are suddenly showing tight, hard centers, and you haven't repotted in more than a year, recently switched fertilizers or changed light fixtures, maybe it's not mites. It could be, but to be sure, you need to get a diagnosis. This means either seeing a mite or taking or sending the plant to your agricultural extension office or other expert who can identify mites as your problem.

Fungal and Bacterial Diseases

Fungal and bacterial diseases are much harder to identify than most insect problems. Powdery mildew, which looks like a dusting of flour on the leaves and blossoms, is easy to diagnose. However, many other fungal diseases display similar symptoms such as mushy leaves, decaying spots on foliage or even the collapse of the entire plant. If you treat the wrong problem, you'll use the wrong fungicide, and that is as effective as using none at all. You can probably narrow down the culprit based on the symptoms, but if you are not sure, consider taking the plant to your local agricultural extension. They can do cultures and give you a definitive diagnosis.

With a diagnosis in hand, you can choose the most effective pesticide to deal with the problem. Most pesticides should be sprayed three times to affect all the stages of insect and mite pests. You need to do a thorough job, or you might risk a new generation of pests with resistance to the pesticides you are using. Fungicides should be used according to the package directions as either a spray or drench. Be sure to follow all directions and safety precautions. Wear personal protective equipment when using any pesticide and never use pesticides in a way inconsistent with the label.

Insect pests won't have any natural predators if they invade your indoor garden.

What if you've done your best and your plants still are not healthy? One of the most painful decisions a grower of any experience level faces is when to send a plant to violet heaven. Sometimes that means throwing away a favorite plant and sometimes it means throwing it all away and starting over.

At one point in my growing career, impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV), an incurable plant virus, invaded my collection and was spread by thrips. I made the decision to toss it all and start again. I had only six violets left, which were growing in a back room. I bought some new plants. Violet friends sent me leaves and plants. A year later, I had a new collection and 6 months after that, I won a national Best in Show.

If disaster strikes your collection, it's okay to be upset. Remember, however, that all is not lost. Plants can be replaced. The lessons you learned from your experience are yours to keep. That knowledge will go a long way toward keeping your new collection healthy in the future.

Happy, healthy growing!

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Thunder Surprise

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: S. Sanders
Semiminiature

Grooming the Minis

By Debbie McInnis Floyds Knob, Indiana

Editor's Note: This is a follow-up to Debbie's helpful article in the November-December 2019 issue of AVM *about growing minis. Here, Debbie shares tips on grooming minis and semiminis for appearance and show.*

The goal when grooming is to have all leaves uniform in size, radiating gradually outward without spaces. If there is a great discrepancy in size (for example, a couple of rows of small crown leaves, then a row of leaves with long stems radiating out), it will not look as good. The same is true if your plant resembles spokes on a bike wheel. That looks kind of silly!

Debbie's Jazz Bouquet, winner of Best Semiminiature and Third Best African Violet at the 2019 AVSA National Convention.

> Leaves on a violet should look like overlapping shingles on a roof.

So, what do you do? Take the rows of the outer, larger leaves off. **Take them off**. Otherwise, those crown leaves will never catch up to the outer leaves. Remove leaves until all the leaves are uniform in size. Leaves on a violet should look like overlapping shingles on a roof.

This means you might have to take off several rows of leaves. Don't be afraid; just do it! Sometimes, there is a culture break. Don't worry; the leaves will grow back — and fast. Once the off-sized leaves are removed, all the plant's energy will go to the small crown leaves and they will grow out much faster. The same goes for rows of smaller leaves lying underneath a row of larger leaves. Take all the smaller leaves off.

Grooming Right Before a Show

A week before a show, even a day before I leave for the show, I check the plant's neck. If a show plant has even a small neck and leaves with a slightly downward tilt, I chop the bottom off and repot it. Using the modified Texas Method (see sidebar), an advantage is you might only have to remove some perlite. I also have cut higher and into the roots, and even cut the stem. So far, doing this hasn't seemed to bother the plants or blooms.

When blooms try to emerge from under the leaves, I'll take my bent tweezers and reach in beneath the leaves to try to guide the blooms out from under. I very gently lift leaves up and rearrange blossom stems to one side of the leaf or the other. I always keep a small opening in the blooms so judges can see the crown leaves.

Tricks of the Trade

When you are grooming your plants at the show during entries and classification, remember to use the name tag stake to your advantage. Before I leave home, I often place a mark on the Solo cup with a magic marker where I believe I should place the stake. Doing this can save you valuable time at the show.

When trying to decide where to place the stake, turn your violet to where most of the blooms are facing you. Place the name tag stake in the back and maybe even have some of the blooms rest upon the stake if they are not standing up sturdily on their own.

But, remember as you determine the front that it is to your advantage to also have a good front view of the plant's best leaves. This is important from a judging standpoint. Then, arrange the blooms to that vantage point. Try to have marred or spotted leaves facing the back of the pot. This is where you'll place the stake.

If possible, arrange blooms evenly around the plant. To hide a chipped or marred leaf, try to lay a lower bloom stem over to cover the area. To help disguise a noticeable space between leaves, gently place the stake by the leaf and insert it into soil, after pulling the leaf over ever so slightly.

Modified Texas-Style Potting

Jodie Davis of Austin, Texas, developed the Texas-Style potting method for African violets, officially naming the method in 1978. Her method mimicked the natural growing conditions of African violets in nature, which is in a layer of forest compost above rocky rubble. The perlite layer replaces the rocky rubble, giving the roots a place to grow down to for moisture but not into soggy soil. The plants are watered from the bottom.

Debbie adds perlite to the bottom of each pot before adding potting mix. This helps prevent wet feet.

JOIN TODAY!

The African Violet Society of America

P.O. Box 22417
Beaumont, Texas 77720
(409) 839-4725
http://avsa.org
Write or call today for information

Board of Director Nominations for 2020

Each year, the AVSA Nominating Committee develops a slate of candidates for upcoming board positions. This year, we have five nominees for open director positions. Members will vote at the AVSA National Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, during the Annual Meeting to be held on Saturday, May 30, 2020. Meet our Director candidates:

Douglas Allen
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Director

I grew up on a farm in Nebraska and went to the University of Nebraska right out of high school, like it was grade 13. I received my engineering degree in 1968 and went to work for General Motors. My career was in the automotive industry, first in technical areas, then in sales and marketing, and finally in general management in the supplier industry.

My interest in African violets began when I met my wife, Lynn, as we worked together at a Michigan company. After about two years, I went to a different company, we began dating and were married in 1985. She had more than a decade of growing experience by that time and I probably picked up the hobby to impress her.

I joined AVSA in the late 1980s and began attending AVSA conventions beginning with the Chicago Convention in 2001. Since then, Lynn and I have attended all the conventions with the exception of the Washington, DC, convention where Lynn had a scheduling conflict. I have developed friendships with some wonderful individuals around the globe. We have invested a lot of time and treasure in the hobby and the payoff has been fantastic!

I have had a term on the AVSA board when Joyce Stork was president and have been on the finance committee for many years. Lynn and I are members of the Town and Country and Michigan State clubs. We were very involved with the 2012 Convention in Detroit.

I appreciate the opportunity to be considered for a position on the AVSA Board.

Minh Bui
Rockville, Maryland
Director

I received my doctorate in plant genetics from the University of Maryland, College Park, in 2009, specializing in flower development and hormone responses (abscisic acid during drought tolerance and salicylic acid during pathogen response). After graduating, I was recruited to the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, where I currently serve as a senior scientist in the cancer field.

I became interested in African violets in 2017 after purchasing my first batch of plants, including Bob Serbin, Super Duper and Ma's Paris Affair. The following year, I joined the Baltimore African Violet Club (BAVC), exhibited for the first time at the national convention in Buffalo and then again at the regional Mid-Atlantic AV Society's (MAAVS) show, where I became an AVSA Student Judge. In 2019, I became a Lifetime AVSA member and exhibited at the local BAVC and regional MAAVS shows, where I was awarded Horticulture Sweepstakes awards. Although I grow a broad range of minis, semi-minis and trailers, my favorites are "nostalgic" standards such as Canadian Sunset, Feather, Pink Lady, Esmeralda and Amethyst. I currently serve as the affiliate chair

for MAAVS, awards chair for the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society and occasional contributor to the MAAVS Memo and *African Violet Magazine*.

Currently, I am an active member of seven plant clubs, three of which I am a lifetime member. Outside my primary occupation, I operate a floral design business that caters to local events, maintaining a collection of about 500 indoor plants spanning more than 80 genera, and I remain an active gardener.

Winston J. Goretsky
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Director

I am a native of Calgary. and have been an AVSA member since 1982, a Life Member since 1986, a Senior Judge since 1994 and became a Judge's Teacher in 2002. In October 2008, I became a Master Judge. I serve or have served on the AVSA Shows & Judges Committee and the Publications, Convention, Technology and Handbook committees and as AVSA President from 2015 to 2017. I have received the Honorary One-Year Membership Award, Continuing Service Awards, Hudson Memorial Affiliate Leadership Award, and the Honorary Life Membership Award.

I am a Life Member of the African Violet Society of Canada, where I have served as a director for many years, as well as president and treasurer. I also am a life member of the Gesneriad Society, an Advanced Gesneriad Judge, director and current first vice president. I am an active member of the Stampede City African Violet Society, conducting workshops on a variety of topics and serving in several roles. I also have served as convention chairman for the AVS of Canada's National Convention & Show.

I have been photographing local and national African violet shows in Canada and the United States for years, becoming the official AVSA Show Photographer for the *African Violet Magazine* in 1996. My love for African violets and other plants began as a youth, and was encouraged by my grandmother, Lena Berkech, who supplied me with my first African violet. I have been growing African violets and gesneriads since about 1974, and love to encourage others by sharing my knowledge and enthusiasm about my favorite plant.

I have been a computer professional for more than 30 years and work as a senior business systems specialist. My wife, Laurel, and I have two children; we all share an enthusiasm for plant life.

Nancy Hayes
Hartford, Connecticut
Director

I have been retired from nursing for 20 years after working in many different areas of care, including operating room and labor and delivery. I was one of the first Prepared Childbirth instructors in the greater Hartford area. Eventually, I chose long-term care for better working hours and completed my career as a hospice nurse.

I have grown African violets for more than 60 years, and even had them on the windowsill while in nursing school in Boston! My years as a member of AVSA have been fruitful and wonderful. There is nothing like an African violet friend, including the "family" that violet friends locally, regionally or nationally have become. I have attended 50 conventions. That was thanks to a wonderful husband and mom who often were left with children so I could travel each year to convention.

I have many interests, the best of which involves family members who call me "Nana." I have eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. I rarely just "sit." I love to knit and there is always someone in need of a Nana sweater, mittens, etc. I also love counted thread embroidery.

I cared for my husband for more than 12 years, the last three of those with him at home in a hospital bed. Our children, extended family and many violet friends helped me care for him, which was his wish. Living without him has taken some adjustment, but friends, especially violet friends, have made it much easier.

Being with violet friends, attending convention and helping AVSA have been a great part of my life along, of course, with my family. This was and is a great organization.

Sandra Skalski
Mullica Hill, New Jersey
Director

I grew my first African violets, gifts from my grandmother, at about age 10. Violets graced my windowsills all through my teens and twenties. I didn't get a serious African violet bug until I walked, or perhaps waddled, at nine months pregnant, into an African violet show and sale in spring 1990. I joined AVSA and that club, the African Violet Club of Burlington County, that fall. Thirty years later, I have a collection of more than 300 plants and have won numerous awards at the local and national level.

I have a bachelor's degree in biology and bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering from Drexel University. Last year, my 35-year career as an engineer came to an end and I am happily retired. My husband and I reside in New Jersey, where I have more time to enjoy an extensive outdoor garden, as well as my violets.

This summer, I passed my Senior Judge's exam. In the past, I have held the position of president for my local club, and Vice President for the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society. Encouraging and educating new growers is especially important to me, so I try to share my knowledge by contributing articles to *African Violet Magazine* and presenting workshops. I currently write the beginner's growing column for the *AVM*.

It's an honor to be nominated; I would love the opportunity to help shape the future of the AVSA as a Board Member.

Thank You for Your Support!

By Randy Deutsch, Fundraising Chair

It is with great relief that we can announce AVSA has reached its goal for the Office Flood Disaster Appeal! When faced with a difficult challenge, it is so wonderful to see how the loyal members of our society step forward to help. Although we received — and appreciate — generous donations from throughout our membership area, the final goal was attained with a very generous donation from David Burde in memory of his late wife, Barbara.

We reached our goal of $20,000! One could not have foreseen the flood disaster that was coming our way, but hit us it did. We also want to offer special thanks to Amy Carruth, and a slew of others who stepped up to get us through this mess. Again, thanks, everyone for your generous donations that will enable AVSA to bring our office and technology back from disaster.

> The final goal was attained with a very generous donation from David Burde ...

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Petite Blarney

Exhibited by: Diane Miller
Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Imp's Billowing Cloak

Exhibited by: Beverley Williams
Hybridized by: J. Jackson
Semiminiature

Meredith Hall — Making Violet Shows Better

By Joyce Stork Henderson, Nevada

Email: joycestork@avsa.org

Have you been to any AVSA Show in the past 30 years? Working behind the scenes, with little credit, Meredith Hall helped make that show better.

December 2019 marked the end of Meredith Hall's tenure as the Show Schedule Approver for AVSA. The approver must review every affiliate show schedule (before it can be released) to guarantee that the show fully complies with the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges*. Meredith enjoyed the job and was good at it. She said, "I hated to give it up because of all the many friends I made either in person or by email. After 18 years it was time, especially since I will be 93 years old soon."

Meredith soon after high school graduation as she was leaving for business college (and to meet her future husband).

Meredith served on AVSA committees for the past 40 years, but before that she was a farm girl, growing up near Bartlett and Plainview, Texas. After high school, she attended business college and met her future husband, whom she married before the end of World War II. Once he finished his schooling, they moved to Houston where they lived and raised their two daughters until his death in 1991.

> Once she learned that violets grew from leaf cuttings ... she began offering violets at her gift shop.

Growing, Showing and Selling Violets

Her first violet was an unidentified hybrid given to her hospitalized mother. "We took it home not knowing what to do with it. Mother said just set it in the window in the laundry room. It wouldn't die, so I felt we should repot it, and of course it grew and bloomed," said Meredith. It wasn't long before she bought four more.

In 1975, Meredith became a charter member of both the Spring Branch African Violet Society and the Lone Star African Violet Council and later the Central Texas Judges Council. Many years later she also joined the First Nighter AVS in Dallas. She attended her first AVSA Convention in 1978 and has missed only once since then. Meredith was even Convention Chair at the 1999 AVSA Convention in Houston, Texas. She enjoyed growing standards and she did well in shows. Meredith's first Best in Show violet was June Swift's "Cotton Bowl" and Meredith would love to find it again.

Once she learned that violets grew from leaf cuttings, Meredith's business instincts kicked in and she began offering violets at her gift shop. In the early 1980s she opened a shop called "The African Violetry" with her mother helping to run the shop until 1998. The store was open six days a week with an inventory of 1,000 violets of all sizes. Meredith also sold at local club sales and wholesale to florists in the area.

Participating in AVSA

Since Meredith was selling violets, she became a Commercial Member of AVSA and soon after became a member of the AVSA Commercial Committee. "I had the pleasure of working with all of the commercial members getting their display tables set up. That was when we could have as many as 15 beautiful display tables in one show. It was great to meet the people who brought all those plants and to see the new introductions," Meredith said.

Meredith at a recent AVSA convention. Photo by Marjorie Bullard.

Along the way, Meredith became an AVSA Director and then served as the AVSA Treasurer for nearly 10 years. She became an accredited AVSA judge, then a judging school teacher, and finally was appointed to the Shows and Judges Committee, where she had many jobs. "I was co-chair. I wrote and mailed teacher exams. I wrote, mailed and graded Senior Judge exams. My favorite job was Show Schedule Approver," Meredith said. Her efforts were noticed — Meredith won the Hudson, the Honorary Life Membership, and the Distinguished Service awards — mostly for doing the background work that kept shows functioning properly.

Meredith won the Hudson, the Honorary Life Membership, and the Distinguished Service awards ...

Fewer Violets, Bigger Pastures

In 2001, Meredith shifted gears a bit and moved to a small ranch near Waco, Texas. She and a daughter each built their homes there. "The small ranch we bought is great. It makes it possible to be back in the country away from the traffic and noise of a large city."

Her family has grown to include two sons-in-law "who I actually claim as sons," two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She is down to only two stands of African violets but remains active in her clubs.

Attending violet shows and conventions are among her favorite memories. Meredith often drove with friends — especially Jane Rexilius, Ruth Goeke, and Irene Harney — and always had fun. When asked if she had any other hobbies, Meredith replied, "I have been so involved in violets that I've never had many other hobbies. But I enjoy sewing and reading and now enjoy being outside with the chickens and cows!"

Meredith might be "out to pasture" these days, but AVSA is grateful for the years she gave to African violets and especially to AVSA shows.

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Indiana Academy, Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
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The two most common parts of an African violet that are the focus of many hybridization efforts are the flowers (shape, petal count, color, etc.) and leaf variegation (Tommie Lou, Crown, Mosaic). However, other parts of the plant are equally controlled by genetic traits and can be the focus of a hybridizer's efforts. Some of these are the shape and texture of the leaves. The original African violet species have simple leaves that are usually oval or egg shaped. There is little if any "texture" to the leaves.

In addition, the hairs on leaves have different characteristics, for example, erect, appressed (close to the leaf surface) or strawberry-like as in *S. shumensis*. Still, the leaves of one species are remarkably similar to another. Like flowers and leaf variegation, mutations have shown up over time and hybridizers now have several leaf characteristics with which to work.

Q: I love leaves with ruffled edges. How is this trait inherited?

A: Many of the mutations in leaf texture such as ruffled edges or quilted texture are genetic dominant traits. The genetic trait for ruffled edges is an additive trait where plants with two copies of the gene inherited from both seed and pollen parents will show a higher degree of ruffling. Many hybridizers prefer to work with single-dose plants, which produce better quality show foliage.

Q: Why do plants with girl foliage look different from each other? Isn't there only one mutation for girl foliage?

A: Actually, girl foliage is unique in that the mutation that produces the trait has originated independently several different times. Some of the mutations are slightly different in appearance and produce more ruffles or texture on the leaf edges. Girl foliage also is a dose-related trait. Plants with single copies of the mutation have less texture on the leaf edges and the white spot at the base of the leaf blade where it joins the petiole is smaller. Double-dose plants have much more texture on the leaf edges. In some cases, the ruffles have ruffles and the white spot at the base of the leaf blade can be very wide. Most hybridizers work with single-dose plants because the foliage is more likely to shape better for show purposes.

The girl foliage mutation also interacts with the plant size.

The girl foliage mutation also interacts with the plant size. The trait tends to produce smaller plants with smaller leaves. The reduced size of miniature plants can alter the overall size of the leaves, and further, make the leaves more triangular in overall shape.

Q: How is longifolia leaf shape inherited?

A: Longifolia leaf shape is one of my favorites and is easy for hybridizers to work with because it also is a genetic dominant trait. It is less clear whether this trait shows dose effects with double-dose plants (homozygous dominant) having even more elongated leaves than single-dose plants (heterozygous dominant). However, I would not be surprised if there is more exaggeration of the elongated shape in double-dose plants.

Relatively few plants have elongated leaf shape. I do not think this is due to difficulty in working with the trait, but more likely that the elongated shape often produces gaps between the leaves. In a rosette style

plant, these gaps are viewed as show faults and growers have avoided plants with longifolia foliage. Most show plants with longifolia foliage are trailers. In these plants, the gaps between the leaves actually are helpful by providing spaces for flowers to emerge between the leaves and stand easily above the foliage. The gaps are present in all sizes of longifolia trailers (miniature to standard) and hybridizers have produced many interesting trailing plants with this foliage type.

Q: If leaf hairs are a genetic trait, is it possible for hybridizers to select for the number of hairs and produce African violets with different degrees of fuzziness?

A: Yes, it is possible for hybridizers to select for the number of leaf hairs, but I don't know that this usually has been the focus of a hybridization program. The easiest way to select for fuzzier leaves is to cross fuzzy with fuzzy and keep those offspring that produce the fuzziest leaves. Dipping into the species plants might help because several of them have higher leaf hair numbers than many of today's hybrids.

One caution I would mention if using species plants: Some of the species have appressed leaf hairs. These hairs do not stand perpendicular to the leaf surface, but instead bend sharply at right angles after emerging from the leaf and become parallel to the leaf surface. This trait tends to make the leaf appear "smoother" and less "fuzzy" compared to species with only erect leaf hairs. Some of my hybridizing work with the species has suggested that appressed leaf hairs are a dominant trait to erect leaf hairs. Most cultivated African violets have the erect leaf hairs, so crossing them with a species with appressed leaf hairs is likely to produce F1 offspring with the appressed leaf-hair trait. This would make the F1 offspring appear to have less "fuzz" on their leaves.

Several hybridizers have tried using *S. ionanthus* subsp. *velutinus* in their crosses to try to produce hybrids with the famous long-haired leaves of this plant. In my experience, the F1 plants are at best intermediate in the expression of the leaf hairs from the *velutinus* parent. The long leaf-hair trait can be passed on to the F2 generation, but it seems difficult for some reason to restore the leaf-hair trait back to the glory of the *velutinus* parent.

I also have seen one plant that carried a mutation for no leaf hairs at all. As might be expected, this plant had very smooth, waxy looking leaves. At first glance, the plant just looked "wrong" for an African violet. It took closer examination to realize that the change in appearance was because the leaf had no hairs. One advantage of the mutation was that the leaves shed water easily and were less likely to develop water spots.

The mutant plant has long since been lost from my collection, but if a hairless mutation ever reappears, it could be of interest to greenhouse growers who could produce crops of plants with less leaf damage from water spotting.

Q: I sometimes see African violets that have "double" leaves, or leaves that have two leaf blades attached to a single petiole. Is this mutation genetic and can it be reproduced?

A: A double leaf (sometimes called a Siamese leaf after conjoined, or Siamese, twins) is a change in the development of the leaf from the apical meristem of the plant. It is a growth pattern change and not a DNA or genetic change. Developmental changes are not inherited sexually or asexually. If you use a double leaf as a leaf cutting, the babies produced will have normal leaves. Using a double-leaf plant as a pollen or seed parent will not transmit the trait to the seedlings. The trait is interesting, but it is a dead end.

Q: What about bustled foliage? How is this trait inherited?

A: The bustled foliage mutation, where extra leaf blades are produced on the petiole, has originated more than once and is inherited as a genetic dominant trait. Only one dose is needed for the offspring to express the trait.

The size of the plant is important in the expression of bustled foliage; larger plants are more likely to consistently show the bustle in each leaf. Semiminiatures are less likely to express the trait consistently and miniatures often appear unable to express the trait at all. Double-dose plants might produce bustled leaves more consistently, but hybridizers rarely work to produce homozygous dominant plants.

Coming Events

March 6-8 — California
Central California African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Fresno Fairgrounds
1121 S. Chance Avenue, Fresno, CA
Friday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m. (sale); noon-7 p.m. (show)
Sunday: 10 a.m. 6 p.m. (sale); 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (show)
Lola Sutherland: 559-906-7366
Teri Watkins: 559-260-9233
fresnoviolets@gmail.com fresnoviolets.org
Charge for Home and Garden Show;
Contact for free admission.

March 7-8 — Texas
Spring Branch African Violet Club
Annual Plant Show and Sale
Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX
Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale); 1-5 p.m. (show)
Sunday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (sale)
Cynthia Severson: 281-682-1073
cseverson57@comcast.net
Karla Ross: 281-748-8417

March 14 — California
South Coast African Violet & Gesneriads Society
Judged Show and Sale
South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
Show: 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sale: 11 a.m.-4 pm.
Carolyn Griswold: 310-821-9862
gris822@msn.com

March 14-15 — Colorado
Rocky Mountain African Violet Council
Annual Spring Show and Sale
Tagawa Gardens
7711 S. Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m-1 p.m. (show); 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (sale)
Trudy Brekel: 303-452-9015
violetlady7@msn.com

March 21 — Arizona
Copper State African Violet Club
Show and Sale
Escalante Community Center, Sano Room
2150 E. Orange St., Tempe, AZ
Noon-3 p.m.
Candace Baldwin: 480-213-4247
copperstateavc@gmail.com
www.copperstateavc.com

First Austin African Violet Society
Judged Show and Plant Sale
Austin Area Garden Center, Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Susan Kautz: 512-365-1818
gizzmo@austin.rr.com
Fee for Zilker Botanical Gardens

March 27-28 — Florida
Heart of Jacksonville African Violet Society
Juried Show and Sale
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sharon Gartner: 904-536-4182
svioletlady@gmail.com

March 28-29 — New York
Sweetwater African Violet Society
West Sayville Fire House
80 Montauk Highway
West Sayville, NY
Saturday: 2-5 p.m.
Sunday: noon-2 p.m.
Mary K. Chelton: 631-286-4255
mchelton@optonline.net

March 28 — Tennessee
Memphis African Violet Society
Judging School
Sue Hoffman, instructor
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/memphisavs

April 3-5 — California
Capital City African Violet Society
Show and Sale
3330 McKinley Blvd., McKinley Park
Sacramento, CA
Saturday: 1-4 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Kathy Norton: 916-617-2406
kathy.norton@mac.com
www.sgaac.org

April 3-5 — Virginia
Richmond African Violet Society
Show and Plant Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Ave.
Richmond, VA
Friday: 1-5 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 1-5 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale)
Sunday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (sale)
Sharon Long: 804-740-5322
Slong15781@aol.com
richmondavs.wordpress.com

April 4 — Delaware
Delaware African Violet & Gesneriad Society
Display & Plant Sale
Boscov's Department Store
Christiana Town Center
Route 273
Christiana, DE
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Bobbie LaFashia: rlafash@comcast.net
www.DAVGS.org

April 4 — Michigan
Michigan State African Violet Society
Sale - African violets and other gesneriads
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 N. Dixboro Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Lynn Allen: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

April 4-5 — New Jersey
African Violet Club of Morris County
25th Annual Judged Show & Sale
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Haggerty Education Center
353 East Hanover Ave.
Morristown, NJ
Saturday: 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Sunday: 11a.m.-3 p.m.
Jill Fischer: HF.JG.Fischer@comcast.net

April 5 — Ontario
Toronto African Violet and Gesneriad Society
Annual Show and Sale
Toronto Botanical Garden
777 Lawrence Ave. East
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Julie Thompson: jmthompson50@xplornet.ca
tavgs.ca
Admission: $2

April 11 — Missouri
Sho-me African Violet Club
Show and Sale
Jacob B. Loose Park Garden Center
51st and Wornall
Kansas City, MO
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Brent Scheuerman: 913-738-9955
christopherviolets@yahoo.com
www.facebook.com/groups/KansasCityAV

April 17-18 — Minnesota
African Violet Society of Minnesota
Show and Sale
Northtown Mall
398 Northtown Drive NE
Blaine, MN
Friday: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Kathy Lahti: lahti@lakedalelink.net
https://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota

April 18 — Connecticut
Windsor African Violet Society
Judged Show and Sale
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broad St., Windsor, CT
8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Nancy Hayes: 860-242-0162
violetnancy@comcast.net
www.windsorafricanviolets.org

April 18-19 — New Mexico
Albuquerque African Violet Club
Annual Show and Sale
Albuquerque Garden Center
10120 Lomas Blvd.

Albuquerque, NM
Saturday: 2-5 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sharon Shannon
sshannon2@swcp.com
AlbuquerqueAfricanVioletClub.org

April 18-19 — New York
Capital District African Violet Society
Annual Show and Sale
St. Matthew's Catholic Church Hall
25 Mountainview Street
Voorheesville, NY
Saturday: 12:30-4 p.m.
Sunday: noon-3 p.m.
Heidi Dillenbeck
heidisviolets@aol.com

April 18-19 — Ohio
African Violet Society of Dayton/Cincinnati
African Violet Society
Joint Club Annual Show and Sale
Eastgate Mall
4601 Eastgate Blvd., Cincinnati, OH
Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Penny Wichman: 859-240-9057
pennypwic@aol.com
avsdayton.com

April 18-19 — Québec
Société des Saintpaulia de Montréal
Annual Judged Show and Sale
Chalet du Parc Maisonneuve
4601 Rue Sherbrooke Est
Montreal, Quebec
Saturday: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
saintpauliamontreal@hotmail.com
facebook.com/SaintpauliaMontreal
http://saintpaulia-montreal.com

April 18 — Tennessee
Memphis African Violet Society
Spring Sale and Display
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
Memphis, TN
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Beth Baker: 901-550-7860
bakerbethrn@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/memphisavs

April 18-19 — Virginia
Tidewater African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Norfolk Botanical Gardens
Azalea Garden Road, Norfolk, VA
Saturday: 1-5 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale)
Sunday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Pat Knight: 757-681-0279
kemts@cox.net

April 24-25 — Iowa
Evening African Violet Cub of Des Moines
Show and Sale
Merle Hay Mall
3800 Merle Hay Rd.
Des Moines, IA
Friday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (sale); noon-9 p.m. (show)
Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (sale)
Tina Cook: 515-556-6892
mollymonster0305@gmail.com
facebook.com/AfricanVioletClubOfDesMoines

April 25 — California
Central Coast AV Society
Show and Sale
Creston Village Senior Living
1919 Creston Rd., Paso Robles, CA
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Thompson: 805-459-6070
znailady1@aol.com

April 25 — Connecticut
Thimble Islands African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Willoughby Wallace Library
146 Thimble Islands Road, Branford, CT
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Madeline Clem: 203-481-9455
mycbuzzard@aol.com

April 25-26 — Massachusetts
Bay State African Violet Society, Inc.
Annual Show and Plant Sale
Tower Hill Botanic Garden
11 French Drive, Boylston, MA
Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dawna DiOrio: DDiOrio@cmopc.com
Cynthia Brooks: cybrooks@charter.net
baystateafricanvioletsociety.wildapricot.org

April 25-26 — New York
African Violet & Gesneriad Society of WNY
Annual Show and Sale
Walden Galleria Mall
1 Walden Galleria
Cheektowaga, NY
Saturday: noon-6 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Judy O'Neil: Judyoneil1945@gmail.com

April 25 — Ontario
Lakeshore African Violet Society of Toronto
Annual Show and Sale
St. Philip's Lutheran Church
61 West Deane Park Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Beverley Williams: 905-620-1149
beverleyandbrucewilliams@rogers.com
lakeshoreavs.com

April 25 — Texas
Moonlight African Violet & Gesneriad Society
Sale and Show
Fort Worth Botanic Gardens
3220 Botanic Garden Blvd.
Fort Worth, TX
9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale); 1-5 p.m. (show)
Kathy Leach: 817-703-6566
kbobl@sbcglobal.net

April 25 — Washington
Seattle African Violet Society and
Puget Sound Gesneriad Society
Annual Show and Sale
Seattle Volunteer Park Conservatory
1400 East Galer Street
Seattle, WA
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jennifer Lambert: 253-495-6689
jlambert1@outlook.com
www.seattleviolets.com

May 1-3 — Pennsylvania
African Violet Society of Springfield
Judged Show and Sale
Springfield Mall, Center Court
1250 Baltimore Pike, Springfield, PA
Friday: 11 a.m.-9 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 1-9 p.m. (show); 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (sale)
Sunday: 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. (show and sale)
Alice Dulaney: 610-356-7459
adulaney@verizon.net

May 2 — Connecticut
AVSA Judging School
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broadstreet
Windsor, CT
Nancy G. Hayes, Teacher
860-242-0162; cell: 860-930-6260
9 Cobblestone Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002
violetnancy@comcast.net

May 2 — Nevada
Glitter Gulch African Violet Growers
AVSA Judged Show
West Charleston Library
6301 West Charleston Blvd
Las Vegas, NV
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Joyce Stork: 402-719-6896
kentsflowers@gmail.com
Richard Craft: ggavg.lv@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/groups/260134107727568

May 2 — New Jersey
Garden State African Violet Club
Show and Sale
Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor, NJ
Noon-4 p.m.
Paula Bal: GSAVCmail@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/Garden-State-African-Violet-Club-174125625957229

May 2-3 — New York
AVGSS of Syracuse, New York
Beaver Lake Nature Center
8477 East Mud Lake Road
Baldwinsville, NY
Saturday: 1-6 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
$5 parking fee
Ann Kelly: 315 637-5733
akelly002@twcny.rr.com

May 2-3 — Ohio
Columbus African Violet Society
71st Annual Show & Sale
Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens
1777 East Broad St.
Columbus, OH
Saturday: noon-5 p.m. (show); 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (sale)
Sunday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (show and sale)
Gary Saunders: garychefgary@gmail.com
www.columbusafricanvioletsociety.org

May 2-3 — Wisconsin
Oshkosh Violet Society
African Violet Show & Sale
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St.
Oshkosh, WI
Saturday: 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Sunday: 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
Kevin Degner: 920-426-3764
kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net

May 8 — Montana
Billings Bloomers African Violet Club
Annual Sale
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
180 24th St West
Billings, MT
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
sassysmom@hotmail.com

May 8 — New Jersey
African Violet Club of Burlington County
Annual Show and Sale
Medford Leas Retirement Community,
Arts and Social Wing
1 Medford Leas Way
Medford, NJ
Noon-5 p.m.
www.facebook.com/AVCLUBURLINGTONCO

May 16-17 — Missouri
Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council
Show and Sale
Missouri Botanical Garden, Orthwein Hall
4344 Shaw Blvd.
St. Louis, MO
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Linda Sumski: 314-406-4628
linda.mslavc@gmail.com

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Proceeds benefit the
African Violet Society of America Inc.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Optimara Rose Quartz

Exhibited by: Sandra Skalski
Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Miniature

Contest Entry —

A Violet Plague

By Josh McKinney Madison, Alabama

I have been putting off writing this article for several months. I thought that it wouldn't happen to me, at least not on such a large scale. Most of my plants looked fine, but then, some of the violet leaves appeared to be shiny and a few blossoms were streaked or distorted (see photos). Later, I noticed stunted leaf growth. I might have treated a few plants with 70 percent isopropyl alcohol as a precaution and removed flowers. Then, random violet leaves started to die. It was usually the outer leaves, not the centers. Gradually, more of the outer leaves shriveled up and were removed.

Any cuttings with young plantlets and on various shelves seemed to succumb to the plague. I thought the issue could be a fungal disease. In the past, Pat Hancock had warned me about the danger of running fans to solve violet problems. Unfortunately, I didn't listen and "threw caution to the ceiling fan," hoping the increased air circulation would reduce new pathogen growth. Instead of helping, the problem grew worse; it wasn't fungal. I considered cyclamen mites, but they destroy the centers first, not random outer leaves. Furthermore, I don't use synthetic pesticide sprays because all my plants are in living areas.

The Plague Progressed

As the plague progressed, plants were left with fewer leaves until only stubs of the crowns remained. I treated them with isopropyl alcohol. It seemed to help, except after they started growing out, they were zapped again. The plants would become weaker each time, so I discarded the ones that looked like they wouldn't make it. My mini-orchids and other gesneriads *(Episcia, Streptocarpella* and *Deinostigma tamiana)* appeared to be resistant.

Covering treated plants with cling wrap or other plastic seemed to help. I repeated the alcohol treatments a few times using a 2-ounce cosmetic spray bottle while leaving the windows open. And I took breaks between plant stands. The bugs were quite tiny — only a fraction of an inch — and they moved fast. They were rice-shaped and a yellow-cream color. To reduce the chance of them hiding in the soil, I added some hydrogen peroxide to my watering regimen.

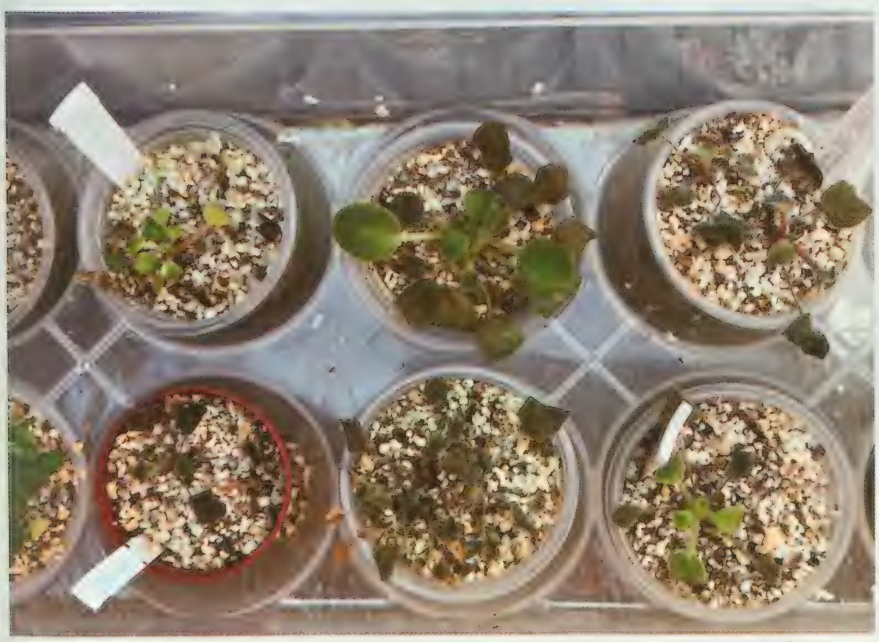
Instead of helping, the problem grew worse; it wasn't fungal.

Identifying the Cause

I had encountered thrips before when I lived in Kentucky. They were tiny, elongated, yellowish-green bugs that infested the flowers. Thrips normally feed on pollen and spill it on the petals and leaves. My solution was to disbud my violets (remove all buds and flowers) and that took care of them. Disbudding removes their primary food source, so they starved to death.

Fast forward to 2019: The thrips literally were sucking the life out of my violet collection. These were the dreaded leaf-eating thrips that did not need pollen to survive, although they still consumed some of it. Some growers have referred to them as super thrips.

I had read on a website that putting some vanilla extract on cotton balls among the plants might attract the thrips and trap them. I put out multiple plastic lids on the shelf with vanilla cotton balls, and even tried tea tree oil on another occasion. Neither method seemed to help at all.



Signs of leaf thrips (top). Outer leaves were more affected (center). Effects on young plantlets (bottom).

I have discarded dozens of plants and most of the survivors don't look very healthy.

Cleaning and Saving

I have discarded dozens of plants and most of the survivors don't look very healthy. A good solution to an infestation is to take leaf or crown cuttings of your favorite plants, remove diseased tissue from them, and apply isopropyl alcohol to them in a small cup (while having adequate ventilation!) Next, wash the cuttings in warm soapy water and blot them dry. Plant them in moistened soil and put them under a dome. When they are healthy and growing well, discard the infected plants. My second mistake was waiting too long to try this, since I thought the alcohol treatments would be more effective against the thrips.

Months before the infestation, I remembered my sister mentioning the streaked and distorted flowers on her Knock Out shrub roses. She had brought some of the flowers over and the thrips had hitched a ride on them! The flower bowl was a few yards from my main plant room, but that was all the pests needed.

Lesson learned: don't have backyard cut flowers or outdoor container plants anywhere near your collection. Thankfully, I have a few healthy plants left in the back bedroom and some with the orchids in the main living area. I hope you never get thrips on your violets, but if you do, you must treat them aggressively or they will persist!

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia

Exhibited by: Richard Nicholas
Hybridized by: E. Korshunova
Standard

In Memory

Dr. Richard Nicholas

Dr. Richard Nicholas of Denton, Texas, passed away on November 22, 2019, and is survived by his wife, Anne, of 49 years, daughter Laura Hupach (Brian), granddaughters Brianna and MaKaya, and many cousins, nephews and nieces.

Richard was a member of the First African Violet Society of Denton, North Texas African Violet Judges' Council, Lone Star African Violet Council and AVSA. Richard was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, to James and Helen (Robinson) Nicholas. He was a graduate of McCallum High School in Austin, Texas. He received his bachelor's and doctoral degrees from the University of Texas at Austin and his master's degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. Richard worked at several universities around the country before coming to Texas Woman's University in Denton in 1996. He served as the Vice President for Student Life until his retirement in 2014. In his retirement he had more time to devote to his African violets and other hobbies, including collecting gems and minerals and stamps.

Richard's love of African violets began with a single African violet in 1971; several years later he began growing seriously while living in San Antonio around the corner from Hortense and Ray Pittman. While in San Antonio, Richard was a member of the First AVS of San Antonio, serving as president, presenting programs and actively participating in shows. While living in Denton, Richard was a member of the First African Violet Society of Denton, serving as president in 1997 and 2006. He presented programs and was instrumental in developing the successful and popular Denton Summer Workshop. Richard served as president of the Lone Star African Violet Council from 2000 to 2003. He also served as show chair and classification chair and in 2016, received the Paula Foster Memorial Service Award. Richard served AVSA as President from 2017 to 2019, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President and Director, and was a member or chair of many committees including the Awards, Research, Scholarship, Library, Tinari Fund Advancement and Salary committees. Richard was a Master African Violet Judge.

Richard also was an award-winning grower. His African violet entries have won many Best in Show awards in local, state and national shows. He received an AVSA Honorary One-Year Membership in 2009 and the Honorary Life Membership in 2019. In addition to Richard's other activities, he began hybridizing. Among his registered hybrids are Lonestar Daybreak, Lonestar Helen Mahr, Lonestar Lady, Lonestar Snowstorm and Lonestar Twilight.

Richard will be missed greatly by his family, friends and his African violet family. Richard will be remembered for his quiet wit and humor, dignity, respect, wisdom, and his love of life.

A memorial service was held for Richard January 19, 2020, in Hubbard Hall at Texas Woman's University.

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Marge Farrand — Ann Arbor, MI

Mag's Festive Fireworks
•(11246) 10/17/2019 •M. Farrand
•Single-semidouble chimera pink ruffled star/purple stripe, bright pink eye, purple fantasy edge.
•Medium green, ruffled.
•Standard.

Hanna Dikdovska — Eindhoven, Netherlands

Anna's Harmony
•(11247) 11/11/2019 •H. Didkovska
•Single-semidouble violet sticktite pansy.
•Chimera variegated dark green, beige and light green, wavy/red back.
•Semiminiature.

AVSA Booster Fund

By Dianna Walston Kokomo, Indiana

Donations received from October through November 2019 Total: $1,806

Geneva — $100-$499
Lincoln AVS, Jean Pederson, Lincoln, NE
Memphis AVS, Arlington, TN
Tucson AVS, Tucson, AZ
Marge Farrand, Ann Arbor, MI
In memory of Imelda
John Hesselberth, West Grove, PA
Patricia Sheen, LaCrescenta, CA

Multicolor — $50-$99
Nancy Carr, Ohio State AVS, Reynoldsburg, OH
Maggie Flynn, Santa Rosa, CA
Patricia Huffman, Carmichaels, PA
Rita Marie Kuni, Columbia, IL

Two-tone — $25-$49
LuAnn Christenson, Eldridge, IA
Nellie Reese, South Chesterfield, VA
Glenda Williams, McDade, TX

Thumbprint — Under $25
Paula Bal, Princeton Junction, NJ
Carol Bruce, Las Vegas, NV
Mary Chelton, Patchogue, NY
Lindsey Leonidas, Naperville, IL
Carolyn Myers, Estill Springs, TN
Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN
Gregory Ross, Little Rock, AR
Betty Sigler, West Palm Beach, FL
Sandra Skalski, Mullica Hill, NJ
Tonya Weisensel, Poynette, WI
Terri L. Zongora, Bethlehem, PA

Contest Entry —

Vintage Violet Preserved in Art

By Pamela Mason Silver Spring, Maryland

A few years ago, a friend asked me to paint a violet she recalled from years past, long since gone from her collection but greatly missed. We researched likely candidates based on her memory and came up with Optimara Hawaii (ASVA Registration No. 6558), a standard with a single violet-colored blossom with a white wavy edge. The foliage is medium green and plain.

Holtkamp registered the cultivar on May 25, 1987, making this a vintage violet. Since I could not find the plant for sale, I purchased leaves from Holtkamp in 2017 and successfully started several plants. They took their time before blooming, but finally they did bloom.

However, other art projects took me away from the task of painting the violet. Additionally, we downsized and moved in October 2018. Optimara Hawaii was among the few violets I brought to the new home.

My patient friend reminded me that she was hoping for a painting sometime soon! I studied the plant in detail, arranging the composition to show the open blossoms from different angles and an emerging bud. The violet foliage was another challenge. I decided to use the medium of colored pencil on draftng film to render the luminous depth of color.

After weeks of work, I finished the painting in September 2019.

After weeks of work, I finished the painting (see below) in September 2019. My friend was enthusiastic at the result but would have to wait a bit longer before she could hang the painting. Much to my delight, it was accepted into a local art exhibition that ran through January 2020.

Family Portrait: *Primulina baishouensis*

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, Ohio
Email: melsgrice@earthlink.net

This *Primulina* recently was discovered in southeastern China by botanists from the Guangxi Institute of Botany in Guilin, China. The plant was found growing in shaded conditions, shallowly rooted on limestone rock cliffs characteristic of southeastern China. This species is only known to be found in two sites, both of which have quarrying activity nearby, so it is considered to be critically endangered. Thanks to the joint efforts of botanists from the Gesneriad Conservation Center of China and members of the Gesneriad Society, *Primulina baishouensis* has made its way to hobbyists in North America.

Primulina baishouensis Characteristics

This diminutive species produces large flowers on a small plant; the flowers are a beautiful mid-purple/blue shade. It seems to be eager to bloom at a very young age and blooms almost continuously, unlike many other primulinas. The attractive dark green foliage is even more succulent than that of an African violet and breaks off easily, so don't try repositioning the foliage like you do for an African violet.

Primulina baishouensis exhibited by Dale Martens. Photo by Mel Grice.

This species likes low light with no direct sunlight. Frequent turning of the plant so that it receives light from different directions is the only way to make sure that the plant grows symmetrically and does not lean toward one direction.

It seems to be eager to bloom at a very young age and blooms almost continuously ...

Natural Conditions

I always try to learn where and how a plant grows in nature so that I can try to duplicate the conditions in which it likes to grow.

The Guangxi region of southern China is the heart of an immense limestone terrain stretching across the Chinese-Vietnamese border. As noted above, *P. baishouensis* grows naturally in cracks in limestone rocks with very little soil. It has a very shallow root system that requires good aeration with consistent moisture. The plant does not tolerate overwatering. I add extra coarse perlite to the bottom of shallow pan pots so that the roots are not sitting in water.

I also have been adding some limestone chips to the bottom of the pots, since in China these plants are found growing on limestone rocks. My soil mix includes ProMix HP, Light Warrior by Fox Farm, coarse perlite, charcoal and some dried molasses. Primulinas require less fertilizer than do African violets, so I use even less fertilizer than I would for an African violet.

I grow my primulinas under two T-12 fluorescent tubes on the bottom shelf of my plant stands where it is cooler. I also have had success growing primulinas in mostly natural light passing through sheer curtains and just a single tube fixture suspended about 3 feet above the plants.

The *P. baishouensis* in the photo was grown by Dale Martens and shown at the Gesneriad Society National Convention flower show in 2019. I can't wait until someone uses this species in hybridizing to create some interesting hybrids. I am sure that you will see some outstanding specimen plants of new Chinese primulinas at the 2020 Gesneriad Society Convention show in St. Petersburg, Florida, this July.

P. baishouensis is definitely one gesneriad that everyone should have in their collection.

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received from November through December 2019 Total $1,106

Geneva — $100-$499

AVS of Minnesota
In memory of Bill Foster
First Nighter AVS of Dallas
In memory of Bill Foster
Virginia Fitzgerald
In memory of Bill Foster
North Star AV Council
In memory of Bill Foster
North Texas AV Judges Council
In memory of Bill Foster
Sue and Charles Ramser
In memory of Richard Nicholas

Multicolor — $50-$99

Randy and Carla Deutsch
In memory of Bill Foster
Alison Marsh
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Missouri Valley AV Council
In memory of Richard Nicholas

Two-tone — $25-$49

Susan Anderson
In memory of Bill Foster
Susan Anderson
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Susan Anderson
In memory of Edna Rourke

Two-tone (continued)

Susan Anderson
In memory of Tom Savage
Patricia Daniel
In memory of Bill Foster
Patricia Daniel
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Linda Hall
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Linda Hall
In memory of Edna Rourke
Sue and Charles Ramser
In memory of Anita Mills
Sue and Charles Ramser
In memory of Edna Rourke
Sue and Charles Ramser
In memory of Tom Savage
Adele McAlpin Petty
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Tristate AV Council
In lieu of judges' fee for Sandy Skalski, Grace Egan, Susan Arnao, Laurel Brown, Jill Fischer, Paula Bal, and Karyn Cichocki

Thumbprint — Under $25

Barbara Greenawalt
Tonya Weisensel
Betty Sigler

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: winners@avsa.org

AVC of Greater Kansas City, MO —Winners:
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Butterfly, Rob's Outer Orbit, Ness' Mini Sota; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Butterfly; Best Miniature: Imp's Fairy Berry, **Lynn Canning**.
•Best Standard: LE-Tsyganskkii Romans; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Wilma Wolverton**.
•Best Trailer: Gene's Blue Ice, **Stephanie Howitt**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Bud's Lava Bomb', **Laurie Nelson**.
•Best Design, **Marian Schaaf**.

Dixie AVS, FL — Winners:
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Butterfly, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Cathy Carter**.
•Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Ella Grace; Best Trailer: Baby Brian; Best Species: S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Carolee Carter**.
•Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit, **Jim Boyer**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Spearmint', **Jillian Cane**.
•Best Design, **Linda McQueen**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Becky McMeel**.

Mid-Atlantic AVS, VA— Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Wild Wings, Panda Paws, Wrangler's Dixie Celebration; Best in Show/Best Standard: Wrangler's Dixie Celebration; Best Design, **Jackie Leitzel**.
•Best Semiminiature: NK-Klubnichnyy Kapkeyk, **Dreama Bigio**.
•Best Miniature: Optimara Little Diamond, **Leslie Swezey**.
•Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Species: S. 5b clone *confusa*, **Lisa Bradley**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Light Prince', **LaDonna Hopson**.
•Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Minh Bui**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Tammy Dubois**.

North Star AVS, MN — Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: PT-Luiza, Sister's Secrets, Ozio; Best in Show/Best Standard: Beach Party; Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Bold Adventure'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Carol Semrau**.
•2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Poltergeist, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Marching Band, **Gail Podany**.
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Texas Space Dust, Rob's Chill Willy; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Argyle Socks, **Patricia Kono**.
•2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Old Fashioned Rose, Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Whodunit; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug; Best Species: S. *ionanthus* ssp. *ionanthus* v. *ionanthus*, **Mary Kealy-Falk**.
•Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Anthony Freedland**.
•Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barb Werness**.

Sundowners AVS, LA — Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Just in Time, Cajun's Two to Tango, Rosie Ruffles; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: N-Adam, Hunter's Chipmunk Cheeks, Hunter's Chickadee Chirps; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rosie Ruffles; Best Semiminiature: Mac's Elegant Emerald; Best Miniature: Hunter's Chipmunk Cheeks; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: S. clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Belinda Thibodeaux**.
•2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: RS-Bomond, Cajun's Pink Negligee, Blanch Holt, **George Ramirez**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Karlyn Trifecta', **Mary Jo Polig**.
•Best Design, **Susie Smith**.
•Design Sweepstakes, **Becky McMeel**.

Tri State AV Council, NJ — Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Jersey Snow Drops, Jersey Blue Moonlight; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Hunter's Storm Clouds; Best in Show/Best Standard: Jersey Snow Drops; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Hand Puppet; Best Miniature: Petite Jewel; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski**.
•Best Species: S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Janet Sierzega**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Columnea sanguinea*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jan Murasko**.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Hunter's Sweet Emotion

Exhibited by: Ken Muzalewski
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Standard

Contest Entry —

An Ounce of Prevention Is … The Key to Healthy Plants!

By Bill Chaney La Pine, Oregon

Most of us are familiar with many of the pests and diseases that can attack our African violets; some of us have had personal experience with one or more of them. Growers can avoid many of these problems by taking simple preventive steps, some procedural and some chemical.

The potential damage that these pests and diseases can cause is well worth the effort of adopting a good prevention program. Some problems simply cannot be cured once they strike and can cause devastating plant losses and heartache.

Isolate All New Plant Material

The number one preventive measure that we all can, and should, use is to isolate all new plant material, along with plants that have been moved out of our environment to a temporary location (shows, meetings, etc.) and brought back home. You can accomplish isolation in several ways. Ideally, you will isolate plants in a separate location (room) away from other plants. Since this is not always possible, plants also can be isolated in containers such as plastic totes or bags that can confine any potential pests.

For isolation to be effective, however, you must be careful when working with isolated plants, and then moving to your other plants to be sure you are not moving pests or pathogens with you. This includes not using any tools or supplies that have been in contact with isolated plants without sterilizing them. Always get in the habit of working with isolated plants **last**, then avoid going near your other plants until you have washed your hands (or better yet showered) and changed your clothes.

Determining length of isolation is a difficult question to answer. The reason is that some pests and diseases are very difficult to spot in early stages. The more confident you are in detecting pests, the shorter the necessary time of isolation. Visual inspection always should include some sort of magnifying device; a hand lens or digital microscope will allow earlier detection of infestations or infections. The new USB digital microscopes are amazing tools for finding tiny pests like mites and thrips.

Keep a Careful Watch

All growers with large collections should have some formal program of monitoring for pests. In addition to visually inspecting leaves and flowers, you can gain insight into plant health by inspecting roots.

Sticky traps are valuable tools for detecting early infestations of pests like thrips and fungus gnats. You can purchase yellow sticky traps in most garden centers or online. You also can make your own traps by coating yellow cups or plastic squares cut from milk jugs (and painted bright yellow) with a material called "stick-em" (also sold online or in garden centers), or with petroleum jelly (this requires more frequent refreshing to keep it sticky).

Fungus gnat adult in a yellow sticky trap. Photo by Jack Kelly Clark, courtesy University of California Statewide IPM Program.

Good cultural conditions always help to keep plants healthy, especially from root rot. These include having the proper level of moisture in the soil, the right pH in the root zone and the right level of fertility and oxygen around the roots. The proper light, temperature and humidity also are important, as all experienced growers already have learned.

Where Did That Come From?

Unfortunately, some pests can find their way to our plants even when no new plants have entered our growing area. Other houseplants brought into our home can be a source of pests like thrips, mites or mealybugs. Cut flowers also are a source of pests. It is safe to assume all cut flowers from our own garden or from the flower shop have a thrips infestation. Some types of insects and disease spores can arrive on our clothing when we come in from the outside garden or might hitchhike on the fur of our pets. Some diseases — and even some insects — can arrive on air currents. Normal window screens will not exclude thrips!

We all want to show off our plants to visitors but be careful if the visitors are violet growers (or even just gardeners) because they might be carrying pests with them. This might seem extreme, but you will likely find that many larger growers have adopted a "no visitors in my grow room" policy.

Insects carry some of the pathogens that arrive in our growing area. Fungus gnats and some other flies can carry disease spores from infected plants they have visited. Believe it or not, some pests can even be introduced deliberately to our plants by other insects. Ants are known to intentionally move mealybugs and aphids from an infested plant to a clean plant because they use the insects like livestock, farming them for the sweet secretions they produce.

Some pathogens, like powdery mildew, are nearly always present and are simply looking for the right environmental conditions to produce an infection. It also is possible for some root rot diseases to be present in potting mixes, just waiting for the right conditions for infecting the root system.

Where Has That Fingernail Been?

Sometimes a plant can be harboring a virus like impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV), but exhibit no visible symptoms for months. However, when we use a knife (or any other tool, including our fingernail) to make a cut on that plant and then use it on another plant without properly sterilizing the tool, we can spread the virus. You can quickly sterilize metal tools with open flames from a small alcohol burner (or lighter or candle). Alcohol, bleach or Physan 20 solutions also sterilize, but be sure you have the right concentration and timing for the product you choose. You also should sterilize work surfaces between handling plants. Thrips that have fed on any infected plant can spread the virus by their feeding. These infected thrips remain infective for their entire lives.

> Good cultural conditions always help to keep plants healthy ...

Hybridizers should take special care with INSV. Since there is no practical way to cure a plant of INSV (or any other virus), be very careful with your special seedlings. If you finally get that seedling that is everything you have ever hoped for, it would be a terrible shame if it were to get infected with an incurable virus, and if it was not propagated before the infection, it is lost forever.

Should I Use Pesticides for Prevention?

Not all growers embrace the use of pesticides in their homes, and some of the pesticides for African violets are highly toxic. Many modern pesticides, however, are quite specific to their target pests and can be safe **if used properly**. In general, it is recommended to only use a pesticide when a pest is present and causing damage. However, the proper use of some pesticides as a preventive measure can avoid the necessity for the use of more toxic pesticides later if a pest outbreak occurs. Although each grower must make the individual decision on the best approach, many growers choose to use select preventive pesticides.

The most common preventive pesticide application in African violets is for mealybugs. It is common for growers to use a soil application of imidacloprid (the active ingredient in Marathon) to prevent infestations of mealybugs because it is extremely difficult to eradicate infestations once they are established. Mealybugs can spread to other plants undetected until the infestation is extensive and nearly unstoppable. Other neonicotinoid insecticides also work for prevention; some have even better water solubility and control a broader spectrum of pests than does imidacloprid.

You Can't Have A Plant for Long Without Roots

Various root rots have long been a problem for African violet growers, but recently a very serious root rot has surfaced. This root rot is caused by *Fusarium oxysporum*, a disease-causing organism that, once established, can be nearly impossible to eradicate. This root rot-causing pathogen has a wide host range and a very successful survival strategy. The fungus produces various types of spores, as well as mycelium. All of these survive long periods in even completely dry material, and still become active when conditions are right.

The signs of infection are black, soft roots (which also can be caused by several other organisms). This can lead to foliar symptoms, or show few to no observable above-soil symptoms. Infected plants can appear healthy and bloom until the infection becomes so severe it kills the entire root system. The scariest part of this disease is that it can spread so easily and remain undetected until it is rampant in a collection.

Many organisms can cause root rot, so definitive causes are impossible for growers to pinpoint on their own. Determining the exact causal agent only is important if normal control measures prove ineffective. It requires the services of plant pathologists to say definitively which organism is causing the problem. In most areas, the Cooperative Extension Service has local offices that can assist with diagnostic services. In some states, this is a free service, and in other states requires a fee.

There is no hard proof that applying a systemic fungicide can prevent all infections by root rot organisms. However, one product already used by some growers (Cleary's 3336F with the active ingredient Thiophanate-methyl), appears to be effective against many disease-causing organisms, including *Fusarium*. Given the potentially disastrous impact of *F. oxysporum* infection, a regular preventive application of Cleary's 3336F to guard against this and other fungal pathogens seems a prudent safeguard for larger growers. Other fungicides also could be effective.

Don't wait until a serious problem has occurred to adopt a prevention program.

Chemical fungicides are not the only option to prevent root rots. Biological agents like *Trichoderma harzianum* are available to protect healthy roots from root rot organisms, including *Fusarium*. Examples of such products are RootShield, PlantShield, or T-22 Planter Box. These products work by supplying beneficial fungi that colonize the roots of plants, which keeps disease-causing pathogens from attacking the roots. Keeping plants happy is always a key to preventing root rot, but sometimes even the best environmental conditions will not protect our plants.

The Bottom Line

We all grow African violets because we love and enjoy them. We should not let the fear of any pest or disease lessen our enjoyment of these wonderful plants. However, we should think about practices that we can make a part of our normal routine to lessen the possibility of having to deal with the unpleasant side of growing our plants: the problems that might arise. Don't wait until a serious problem has occurred to adopt a prevention program. Have fun with your plants but remember that ounce of prevention … could be worth a pound of cure!

Hosted by the Central Arkansas African Violet Society

WELCOME TO ARKANSAS!!!

African Violet Society of America
74th Annual Convention & Show
"Violets Go Hog Wild in Arkansas"
May 24–31, 2020

Show & Salesrooms Open To The Public
Friday May 29, 9am–5pm / Saturday May 30, 9am–3pm

Little Rock Marriott Hotel • 3 Statehouse Plaza, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Annual Convention —

Go Hog Wild or Relax in Little Rock

Attending AVSA National Conventions and Shows gives you the opportunity to visit new, fun places on your own or on one of our organized tours. We expect Little Rock, Arkansas, will be one of your favorite trips. To be sure all attendees get the full Little Rock experience, the convention committee is offering a variety of tours, all run by a local professional company called Arkansas Destinations. All tours include transportation and professional tour guides.

Here's a preview of the fun that awaits:

Spa City Adventure

Be sure to arrive by Tuesday (May 26) for a full day of adventure and relaxation in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Your tour will take you to Garvan Woodland Gardens, the state's botanical gardens (where you can stroll the gardens or pay for a golf cart tour). Then you will head to the famous Bath House Row, where you can find a good lunch spot. In the afternoon, you will tour the Fordyce Bath House Museum and then have time to enjoy Bath House Row on your own.

Garvan Woodland Gardens features 19 gardens on more than 200 acres.

All you have to do is sit back, enjoy and laugh with your friends.

Plantation Country

Learn all about the South's cultural history as you tour the Marlsgate Plantation home and gardens and enjoy an elegant sit-down luncheon. The tour, which runs Wednesday, May 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., gives you an insider look at the wedding gift of 1,100 acres presented to Nettie Steele in 1850 and restored in the 1980s. After the tour and lunch, the bus will stop at the Old Mill, a historic re-creation of an 1800s water-powered grist mill.

Little Rock Sightseeing

On Thursday morning (May 28, from 9 a.m. to noon), take in all that is historical, beautiful and fun with this tour of Little Rock. You'll see several popular Little Rock districts and sites and tour the Central High National Historic Site and the Clinton Library and Museum, where you can see a replica of the Oval Office and Cabinet Room. Then, sit and relax as the tour guide takes you through historic and popular districts.

Dinner and a Show

On Friday evening (May 29), head to one of Arkansas' most popular attractions — Murry's Dinner Playhouse. Enjoy dinner, the charm of

the 1960s theater, and have lots of laughs. You'll get to see "Menopause, the Musical" while you enjoy a delicious buffet dinner. The show is billed as a "hysterical musical parody set to classic tunes from the 60s, 70s and 80s." All you have to do is sit back, enjoy and laugh with your friends.

The tour company has created full-page flyers for each tour listing costs and all the features the tours include. Read more about each tour by linking from the AVSA Convention page (avsa.org/conventions-2020) to the helpful flyers.

Just add the tour to your registration on the same web pages. And be sure to make the most of your visit to Little Rock!

Annual Convention — Are You Ready Yet?

By Candace Baldwin

Are you ready for your first convention? After hearing about it from friends and seeing pictures of the amazing plants, designs and fun festivities in the *AVM* every year, you've decided to take the plunge and go. Congratulations! I know you'll have a good time and meet new friends.

If you haven't yet registered for the convention, you still can by downloading and completing the convention package available on the AVSA website (avsa.org/conventions-2020) or with online registration. One of the questions you'll need to answer is whether you want to enter any plants or designs in the Show. I highly encourage you to do one or both.

Participating in the show at the national convention is an amazing experience. I know many people shy away from this at their first convention, saying they just want to "go and see what it's like" before being an exhibitor. I felt the same way and was more than a little intimidated at the thought of entering at my first convention. I did it anyway and am so glad I did. Having a goal of at least one entry gave me a reason to spend more time with my plants!

I will hold a First-Time Attendees meeting on Wednesday afternoon where I'll review various aspects of the convention. I'll cover things like explaining the raffle tables, reviewing the souvenir convention booklet and giving insider tips. You'll also have lots of time to meet other first-timers and answer questions. Check for signs on Wednesday morning around the hallways and by the registration desk for the specific time and location.

I will hold a First-Time Attendees meeting on Wednesday afternoon ...

Take note: when you arrive at the hotel, one of the first things you should do is to check in at the convention registration desk. There, you will receive a package that contains lots of information about the activities for which you registered, the souvenir convention booklet and other assorted items. Until then, feel free to contact me at aviolets@hotmail.com with any questions. See you in Little Rock!

Annual Convention —

Come for Fun, Stay to Learn Preview of 2020 Presentations

Sometimes, it is hard to pinpoint the most popular activities at the AVSA National Convention. Maybe that's because there are so many from which to choose. And that includes the excellent presentations planned for this year's Little Rock convention on Thursday through Saturday. Here's a preview of the planned presentations and the generous experts who are ready to share.

African Violets 101:
Wait!! It's Not Just for Beginners
Annie Rieck, Olympia Fields, Illinois
Are you new to growing African violets? Or would you like to learn what's new since you learned to grow however many years ago? This is the presentation for you!!! During show judging, join Annie Rieck, host of the All About African Violets podcast, for a fun-filled presentation that will have you growing plants in no time at all!

African Violet Plant Health & Diagnosis:
The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
Glenda Williams, McDade, Texas
Do you know what's going on in your plant room? When was the last time you got up close and personal with your plants? Join Glenda for an overview of the good, the bad and the ugly. She'll cover how all affect African violet plant health; diagnosing, preventing and controlling diseases; and take you on a mystical journey into the microcosmos of the secret life of plants!

Unleash Your Creativity and
Find Your Passion for Design
Mary Husk, Austin, Texas
Everyone has creativity within. For some of us, it lies hidden, waiting to be unleashed. For others, it is present in everything around them. What is the key to tapping into our creativity and expressing it? This session will focus on basic design elements and simple ways to unleash your creativity and find your passion for design.

Everything You Wanted to
Know About *Sinningias*!
Dale Martens, Davenport, Iowa
Dale Martens, one of AVSA's Bronze Medal recipients, will show lots of beautiful photos of micro, miniature and standard size *Sinningias.* Learn how easy they are to grow, along with tips on propagation and what to do with the tubers. Dale will share secrets to maximize blossom count. She'll probably also show photos of her latest miniature hybrids, including *S.* 'Dale's Christmas Bells'.

Spectral Enlightenment:
One Light Does Not Fit All
Dr. Minh Bui, Rockville, Maryland
With the growing popularity of LED lights, African violet growers now have more lighting options than ever before. Some growers have made the switch, and others remain cautious and skeptical. Dr. Bui will discuss the visible and nonvisible light spectrum that plants require for growth and flowering, types of lights available, light bulb temperature (K) and intensity, and other aspects of lighting.

Be sure to include these great presentations in your personal convention and show schedule. Get the scheduled times and more details — and register — on the AVSA website: avsa.org/conventions-2020.

Annual Convention —

Luncheon Auction

By Candace Baldwin Email: aviolets@hotmail.com

Don't let another year go by of only hearing about the cool stuff won at the AVSA National Convention's Luncheon Auction. If you haven't been, make this the year you join in and catch the bidding fever!

It all starts with generous donations from our individual members, commercial members and clubs. Please consider donating a violet-related item or anything rare, unique or unusual in nature. Don't forget to check your shelves and donate a starter plant (or two, or three) of recent introductions or vintage violets. We'll acknowledge donors with a listing on all Luncheon tables.

New for the 2020 convention: Watch for sneak previews of select items on the AVSA Facebook page during convention week, leading up to the Luncheon on Friday. We also need volunteers to help inventory items, be spotters during the "heat of the bidding" and provide receipts to the winning bidders. Please email me at aviolets@hotmail.com if you can volunteer to help or plan to make a donation.

When you donate an item, please note that it's for the Luncheon Auction and the donor's name. Send non-perishable donations to Danny Tidwell at:

Danny Tidwell
PO Box 111
McRae, AR 72102

Don't miss out again; sign up to attend the Luncheon Auction when you register for the 2020 convention. If you've never been, come see what the buzz is all about. It's great fun to bid and even more fun to win knowing that with every contribution (either donating or bidding), you're supporting AVSA.

2020 AVSA Convention Awards Convention Show

By Sharon Gartner Little Rock, Arkansas Email: svioletlady@gmail.com

Hello, it is your Awards Chair. "Let's Go Wild" with award donations for the Arkansas convention!

I want to thank all those individuals, clubs, councils and commercial members who already have given so generously for the 2020 Arkansas Convention. It is your generosity that makes the show so special and gives the winners that extra incentive to show every year. The final deadline to be listed in the Souvenir Book will be April 11, 2020. So, there still is plenty of time to be included.

A list of the current awards is on the AVSA website at www.avsa.org, under the Convention tab. We also included most of the awards in the January/February issue of *AVM* (see page 40). Although every attempt has been made to list the awards correctly, mistakes happen, and we reserve the right to modify or change these listings. Please do not hesitate to contact me, Sharon Gartner, svioletlady@gmail.com. Let's rock this convention with awards!!!

Please send your check or money order to:

AVSA Office, Awards
PO Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

Tally Time 2019

By Susan Anderson

4040 E. Maldonado Dr. • Phoenix, AZ 85042
Email: tallytime@avsa.org • avsa.org/tallytime

The 2019 Tally Time annual report is a summary of the African violet varieties and species receiving the most awards in AVSA Standard Shows throughout the past year. This year's report summarizes results of 46 shows across six geographic regions. A total of 328 different African violet varieties (32 species and 296 hybrids) were recorded in Tally Time this year.

Thanks to all participating affiliates for submitting reports. Please remember to save time and postage by entering show results directly online at www.avsa.org/tallytime. To have winners included in the annual summary, please submit the Tally Time report by November 20. Enjoy growing and showing!

Greatest Number of Awards

	Variety, Hybridizer, Registration No.	Total Number of Awards	Number Best In Show	Number Second Best	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
STANDARDS	**Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler** P. Hancock #8745	11	2	0	4	5
	Funambule N. Robitaille/D. Croteau #9660	7	0	1	3	3
	Rhapsodie Clementine Holtkamp #8341	6	1	0	3	2
	Rebel's Rose Bud R. Bann #9288	5	2	0	1	2
	Optimara EverGrace R. Holtkamp #9123	5	1	0	2	2
	Jersey Snow Flakes R. Kurzynski #9820	5	0	0	5	0
SEMIMINIATURES	**Jolly Butterfly** H. Pittman #10724	12	1	1	7	3
	Ness' Crinkle Blue D. Ness #8136	9	1	0	4	4
	Rob's Kitten Caboodle R. Robinson #9704	8	1	1	4	2
	Mac's Misty Meadow G. McDonald #10153	8	0	2	3	3
	Rob's Combustible Pigeon R. Robinson #9462	7	0	1	4	2
	Rob's Outer Orbit R. Robinson #8738	6	0	2	3	1
	Rob's Fuddy Duddy R. Robinson #7886	5	0	0	4	1
MINIATURES	**Jolly Orchid** H. Pittman #9719	14	0	1	5	8
	Orchard's Bumble Magnet R. Wilson #8479	11	1	2	4	4
	Rob's Chilly Willy R. Robinson #9461	4	1	0	1	2
	Honey Blue Ace H. Pittman #9265	4	0	1	2	1
	Petite Blarney H. Pittman #10561	4	0	0	1	2

	Variety, Hybridizer, Registration No.	Total Number of Awards	Number Best In Show	Number Second Best	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
TRLS	**Rob's Boolaroo** R. Robinson #8053	10	0	0	1	9
TRLS	**Rob's Galiwinku** R. Robinson #8059	4	1	0	1	2
SPECIES	***S* 5c1 clone *ionanthus***	9	0	1	3	5
SPECIES	***S* 5b clone *confusa***	8	0	1	2	5
SPECIES	***S* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert**	8	0	0	5	3
SPECIES	***S* 5h clone *rupicolus***	7	0	1	3	3
SPECIES	***S* 5i clone *velutinus***	6	0	0	4	2

*TRLS = Trailers

Geographic Region, State/Province (Number of Shows):

Region I: Arizona (2), California (4), New Mexico (1)
Region II: Iowa (1), Minnesota (2), Missouri (2), Nebraska (2), Ohio (3), Wisconsin (2)
Region III: Connecticut (1), New Jersey (2), New York (6), Pennsylvania (2), Virginia (3)
Region IV: Louisiana (1), Oklahoma (1), Texas (1)
Region V: Florida (4), Georgia (1), Tennessee (1)
Region VI: Alberta (1), Nova Scotia (1), Ontario (1), Quebec (1)

Award Winners by Geographic Region

	Variety	Total Number of Awards	Geographic Regions I	II	III	IV	V	VI
STANDARDS	**Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler**	11	-	3	-	1	7	-
STANDARDS	**Funambule**	7	-	-	5	-	-	2
STANDARDS	**Rhapsodie Clementine**	6	-	4	1	-	1	-
STANDARDS	**Rebel's Rose Bud**	5	-	-	-	-	3	2
STANDARDS	**Optimara EverGrace**	5	3	-	2	-	-	-
STANDARDS	**Jersey Snow Flakes**	5	-	1	3	1	-	-
SEMIMINIATURES	**Jolly Butterfly**	12	1	6	3	-	2	-
SEMIMINIATURES	**Ness' Crinkle Blue**	9	1	-	5	-	1	2
SEMIMINIATURES	**Rob's Kitten Caboodle**	8	3	4	-	-	-	1
SEMIMINIATURES	**Mac's Misty Meadow**	8	2	1	4	-	1	-
SEMIMINIATURES	**Rob's Combustible Pigeon**	7	-	2	2	-	-	3
SEMIMINIATURES	**Rob's Outer Orbit**	6	-	3	-	-	-	3
SEMIMINIATURES	**Rob's Fuddy Duddy**	5	-	-	1	-	4	-
MINIATURES	**Jolly Orchid**	14	1	7	3	-	3	-
MINIATURES	**Orchard's Bumble Magnet**	11	-	5	5	-	1	-
MINIATURES	**Rob's Chilly Willy**	4	2	1	-	-	-	1
MINIATURES	**Honey Blue Ace**	4	-	1	-	3	-	-
MINIATURES	**Petite Blarney**	4	-	3	-	1	-	-
TRLS	**Rob's Boolaroo**	10	3	2	3	1	-	1
TRLS	**Rob's Galiwinku**	4	-	1	2	-	1	-
SPECIES	***S* 5c1 clone *ionanthus***	9	2	5	2	-	-	-
SPECIES	***S* 5b clone *confusa***	8	2	1	3	-	1	1
SPECIES	***S* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert**	8	1	2	3	-	1	1
SPECIES	***S* 5h clone *rupicolus***	7	1	-	5	-	-	1
SPECIES	***S* 5i clone *velutinus***	6	-	3	3	-	-	-
	Number of Winners	183	22	55	55	7	26	18
	Number of Shows Reported	46	7	12	14	3	6	4

*TRLS = Trailers

Contest Entry —

Bring New Life to Club Programs

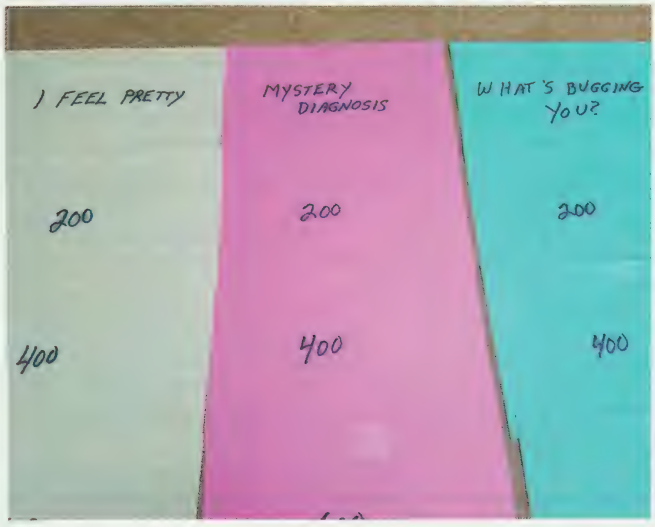
By Cristy Boothe Cordova, Tennessee

Do you struggle to find new activities and programs beyond the same old, ho hum ideas? We all love to play Violet/Leaf Bingo and have raffles with leaves and plants so others can share. Those are fun activities, but why not try something just a little out of the ordinary?

Recently, I reached out to our affiliate members and asked for new and different ideas to share with fellow AVSA members. The result was surprising and enlightening! These are some of the creative and unique ideas club members shared.

"What Is ... African Violet Jeopardy?"

One of my favorite ideas came from Sandy Pine, a member of Southern New Jersey African Violet Club. Sandy has created a Jeopardy game using violets as the theme! She started with index cards in five different colors to create her categories, "Go To the Head of the Class," "That's the Way I Like It," "What's Bugging You," "Mystery Diagnosis" and "I Feel Pretty." There are five question cards for each category. The "values" are written on the front, and the question and answer are written on the back.



Sandy Pine's "Jeopardy" cards.

Sandy has created a Jeopardy game using violets as the theme.

To play, the club places the cards on a bulletin board or foam board (or you can use a wall and some tape). The "host" takes the card chosen by the contestant and gives the answer (per Jeopardy style). Examples are: "This plant class has a diameter of 6 inches or less" with a question of "What is a miniature?"

Under the category of Mystery Diagnosis, "Fine gray film on leaves" is answered with the question "What is powdery mildew?" You can divide your group into three teams, with one member as spokesperson. It would be fun to have a bell or noisemaker and someone responsible for deciding which team rings in first. If a team gets the answer correct, the value of the card is added to their score (or subtracted if they are incorrect). There even is a Daily Double card! Only members of the team that chooses it can answer. They make a wager, just like in the TV version of Jeopardy. You can create different categories or contact Sandy for the full set of rules and questions she has developed. Her email address is pines2@comcast.net.

How About Other Activities?

Sandy's game idea made me think of other interesting games that we could develop, such as Wheel of Fortune. That could be simple, since it is so much like the old game called Hangman. You could use the names of violets, or phrases such as, " Violets are my passion," "Growing trailers is a challenge,"

or Standards, Miniatures and Semiminiatures." Get those creative juices flowing to create this or other popular games!

Get Out or Bring In

Road trip! Who doesn't like to go visit a store or establishment related to growing? Mary Thompson with the Central Coast AVS in Past Robles, California, found a commercial nursery within driving distance and planned a field trip with the owner. The nursery grows African violets and other streptocarpus varieties, along with other plants. Members toured the greenhouses, got many questions answered, and purchased plants. They also had a meeting at a local hydroponics store and learned about lighting, fertilizers and other interesting tidbits. This would be a great opportunity to advertise club meetings if store owners would allow you to leave flyers or cards at their store!

Or bring people in and engage them in violet care. Myra Lader of the Yuma Orchid and African Violet Society said for one meeting a year, her club invites the public to bring their violets in for repotting. The club supplies the potting medium and the expertise to separate and repot the violets. They advertise in the local newspaper's garden activity column and through public service announcements on TV and radio. Consistently advertising your club activities and programs can generate a surprising amount of interest.

Get creative with your programs and see more shared ideas in the May/June issue.

Fun With Leaf Bingo

By Dale Martens Davenport, Iowa

Twice a year, the Quad City African Violet Society members bring leaves for playing "Leaf Bingo" while eating snacks. Winners take home a plastic baggie holding a leaf. We play this for our December holiday party and at the first meeting after our show.

During our show at a local shopping mall, we promote our group by having people sign up to be notified of the next meeting. We tell them that they'll have an opportunity to win several African violet leaves by playing a free game of Bingo. It's a great way to introduce new people to our club by having fun and taking home leaves to grow. Our show is usually in May and we offer them a free membership until our September meeting, which is our yearly membership renewal time.

Luckily for us, the local library lets us have a room for $5 a meeting and we meet from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Quad City AV Society playing leaf bingo at their holiday meeting.

Contest Entry —

What's in Your Soil Mix?

By Karyn Cichocki Lafayette, New Jersey

Email: kdc05@ptd.net

You can ask 20 growers what soil mix they use and you probably will get as many different answers. Some use commercially prepared soil and others mix their own. Members in the local groups to which I belong have used both ProMix and Fafard brands of soil mixes. Even the low-end mixes include starter nutrients and are pH adjusted, but what are the nutrients?

Mixes Change

Some club members have complained that their plants suddenly were not looking well only to find out that the commercial mix ingredients had been changed. One could say, "read the bag," but the full information on how much per unit of mix isn't always displayed on the bag; after all we aren't eating it!

If you use commercially mixed soils, then you need to read each new bag, maybe even contact the manufacturers or go on their website to find out exactly what is in the mix and at what ratio. If you don't repot on a regular basis, it is a good idea to test the pH of the soil mix with a pH tester specifically made for testing soil.

Personal Mix

I prefer to mix my own soil and therefore have more consistency and control over the ingredients. Mixing your own soil means you need the room to store the ingredients. If that isn't possible, maybe your local society would be interested in mixing a batch of soil for your members to share.

Buying larger quantities of ingredients can be cheaper and having a "Soil mix party" might be a lot of fun. Besides providing soil for members, you could package bags at a sales table, like some local groups are doing.

> This helps their roots breathe more and improves drainage.

Here in the northwest corner of New Jersey, I have well water with a pH between 7 and 7.5. Therefore, I don't have to add dolomite lime to the soil mix like I did when I lived on Long Island. I start out with plain peat moss and like the Fafard brand because the mix is finer and has less debris in it. I used to moisten the peat moss and then cook it in the oven at 325 degrees F for an hour, but for about two years, I have instead been moistening the peat moss with boiling water and have not had any problems.

A species African violet repotted with dirty perlite.

I wick-water my African violets, so I make up a very light mix. I wrote about using what I call "dirty perlite" last year for the saintpaulia species (*AVM*, March/April 2019). I would put the coarse perlite (which has large chunks and creates good air space)

in a 6-inch square by 10-inch tall container, filling it about halfway and adding just enough peat moss (maybe one and one-half Solo cups) to make it look dirty, so it was mostly perlite.

Lightening the Mix

The species plants loved the dirty perlite, so I tried it on a couple of hybrid violets and found that some liked it and others didn't. I decided to lighten my soil mix even more. Instead of two parts peat moss to one part coarse perlite and one part coarse vermiculite, I now use one part peat moss, two parts coarse perlite and no vermiculite, so the mix still has a peat base but is very light.

I don't add anything else to the soil and find I don't need to because I repot often. I try to repot at least every six months but often do it sooner than that. Most successful growers for show say it is best to repot every three months. By repotting more often you don't have to worry about the peat moss breaking down and the pH of the soil or having fertilizer salt build up. You also have a better chance of discovering any problems with your plants before they get out of control.

I know several people who put charcoal and mycorrhizae into their soil mix. The charcoal sweetens the soil and the mycorrhizae are beneficial bacteria that will help the roots absorb nutrients and stay healthy. I haven't used either in my soil mix but just purchased a mycorrhizal additive to try. I'll put some in a small batch of soil mix and use it on a couple of plants for testing.

For Other Gesneriads

I know many of you, like me, grow other gesneriads. I tweak my soil mix for those plants. I grow all my other gesneriads in my basement, which is unheated. The temperature in winter averages between 55 and 60 degrees F if the outside temperatures stay below freezing for a long time. Because of the cooler winter temperatures, I don't wick water the plants in the basement, therefore I can use a heavier soil mix. So, my general soil mix for the other gesneriads consists of three parts peat moss, one part coarse perlite and one part coarse vermiculite. I add another part of perlite for plants that are epiphytic, such as *Columnea*, or that grow in rock crevices, as do *Primulina* or *Petrocosmea*. This helps their roots breathe more and improves drainage.

For the past couple of years, I've experimented with two rock products; ...

For the past couple of years, I've experimented with two rock products; one is Espoma Soil Perfector, which is made from a "naturally derived, ceramic mineral that is kiln-fired at temperatures exceeding 2000 degrees F." The company says the process creates a granule that is lightweight but durable and contains thousands of tiny storage spaces. The purpose is to better hold the right balance of water, air and nutrients to improve soil structure.

The other brand, Sunleaves Rocks (0.5 to 1.5-inch) advertises its use for hydroponic growing. It is described as a "reusable growing medium with serious H2O-holding power." The rocks are made by superheating shale to temperatures up to 2,000 degrees F, which renders them pH-neutral and chemically inert. (Both brands are on Amazon with free shipping).

I like the Espoma brand because the rocks are gray and make a nice top dressing, but both work well. I add these to my soil mix to make a grittier soil and for growing *Petrocosmea*, which I saucer water. I also started to experiment with the Gritty Mix Imperial Potting Mix, which consists of Turface (pure calcinated clay), granite chips and very fine pine bark. I mixed one part of Gritty Mix and one part of my soil mix (one part each of peat, perlite and vermiculite), so that I have a lighter gritty mix. Since *Petrocosmea* and many *Primulina* grow in crevices of limestone, I think this will mimic their natural conditions.

Just remember to change only one thing at a time and on a couple of plants only, not on your entire collection. In the next issue, I will talk more about pH in your soil and water.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Margaritas

Exhibited by: Linda Sumski

Technology

Exhibited by: Paul Kroll
2nd Best Design in Show
2019 AVSA National Show

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Treasures of the Gulf

Exhibited by: Fran Russom

Winged Jewels

Exhibited by: Judith Carter

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

A Swift Return

By Teresa Odle Email: editor@avsa.org

When the manufacturer of self-watering Aquamatic Planters stopped production in the 1970s, June and Jack Swift took action. June, who had been growing, hybridizing and selling African violets for years, asked her husband, Jack, to come up with a similar solution. He did, and the result was the Swift Moist-Rite Planter, a self-watering planter with a reservoir.

Jack died in 2007 and June passed away in 2018, halting production of Swift planters. But that's about to change, because their daughter, Connie Cornell, and her husband, David, are picking up where Connie's parents left off. As AVSA prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary as a society, it seems fitting to honor the past with a look to the future.

About June and Jack

June was a prolific grower who hybridized about 550 varieties of African violets. Connie recalls a living room full of nearly 200 violets growing under blue lights. "Kids were always asking me about those blue lights, and I was embarrassed," she said. Although when older, Connie helped her mother in her African violet shop on Saturdays, she was not interested in growing violets at the time. Jack was the intelligent, quiet type who did the background work of inventing the Swift planter (see sidebar). They sold the planters through the late 1990s, until Jack began having health problems.

June had been very active in AVSA for decades and in growing and selling both the popular planters and African violets, along with running her shop in Dallas. She and her sister, Charlyne Reed of Arkansas, grew "together" from a distance and met up at national conventions. The late Bill Foster talked often about how June mentored him in his early growing days. It seems she had plenty of success in growing, selling planters and promoting her love of African violets.

Photo of June and Jack holding a Swift planter in a past *AVM* article.

A Little Serendipity

At her mother's funeral, Connie — who lives in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and was June and Jack's only child — had three people ask her if she was planning to start making the Swift planters again. "At the time, I was working as a nurse full-time," Connie said. When she and David cleaned out her parents' home after June's death, they took a few planters and some of the old business files but made no firm plans.

Connie retired just last year. David already had laid the groundwork for a possible retirement activity, even if some of his work was subconscious. Jack had invented a one-of-a-kind drilling machine that punched four holes at a time just to use for their Moist-Rite planters. David and Connie spotted it in the Swift's home and David "kept it on a whim."

David also happened to have an old Swift planter from the move still in his car last year when discussing possible retirement business ventures with an entrepreneur acquaintance at his church. "He told me we needed a product and a manufacturer," David said. He showed the man the planter, and their product was set.

As for the manufacturer, Connie and David had no idea. So, they went through the old paperwork they had kept and found the manufacturer — Cary Products of the Dallas area. David knew that having a new mold made would cost up to $35,000, but by another happy coincidence, Cary's owners had kept the mold, and even some remaining plastic. Because of the distance, however, Connie and David sought a local plastics company, and found one in Broken Arrow. When we last spoke, they were about to meet to choose colors and get production rolling.

Connie and David Cornell setting up new Swift planter production.

Looking Forward

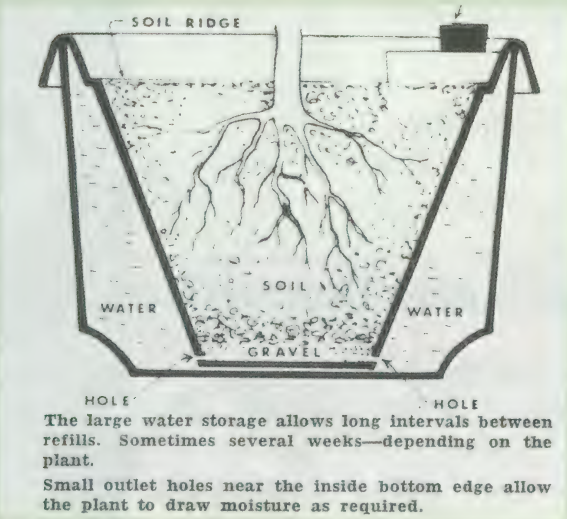
Now that Connie and David have the mold, the hole punch and a manufacturer, they are ready to produce and sell June and Jack's self-watering containers. The manufacturer will give them each planter's top and bottom pieces. Connie and David plan to punch the holes in the bottom and attach the saucer and container before shipping, just like Connie's parents did in the 1990s. The couple has joined AVSA and say they will be at the national convention sale in Little Rock this May. Contact them at moistriteplanters19@aol.com or 918-951-3014 for questions or to pre-order.

... by another happy coincidence, Cary's owners had kept the mold.

This is such a wonderful tale of destiny, bringing back a "vintage" African violet product and honoring one's parents. As David said, "You know how you always have fears of becoming your parents? I've become my mother-in-law!" Connie added, "I am channeling her myself, and I believe my parents are probably 'smiling in heaven'."

Jack's Design

The Swift Moist-Rite Planters took the concept of earlier, oblong Aquamatic planters and improved upon it as an African violet container. Jack Swift replaced the sponge in the Aquamatic with a reservoir and holes in the bottom of the planter to draw up moisture. He also designed a single planter with a square shape; the plastic planters came in a variety of colors.


SOIL RIDGE
SOIL
WATER
WATER
GRAVEL
HOLE
HOLE
The large water storage allows long intervals between refills. Sometimes several weeks—depending on the plant.
Small outlet holes near the inside bottom edge allow the plant to draw moisture as required.

An old schematic showing how the Swift Moist-Rite Planter worked; Connie and David plan to make no changes to the design.

Article Contest Update

Congratulations go to Rich Follett, winner of the January/February 2020 issue's article contest for his article, "New Life for a Once-Defunct Club" (page 31). He will receive one or more new introduction leaves and starts. Thanks to everyone who has entered the contest. Rich and other winners will be entered to win the annual award, which includes 32 leaves or starts and a free annual membership to AVSA.

Remember, just submit an article with ideas, tips or stories about African violets. We especially love stories about growing challenges and solutions. Submit your article by the deadline for each issue (editor@avsa.org). Mark it "Contest Entry" and include your name and city. You can send it by email or mail to the editor (address on inside front cover.)

This year's article contest winds up with our May/June issue and we will announce the annual prizes at the National Convention in May. Congratulations to Rich!

Ruth Beck Honored for 100th Birthday

Ruth Beck, a founding member and past vice-president of the Burbank African Violet Society, recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Mayor Sharon Springer, of Burbank, made a presentation to Ruth and the club had a small luncheon for her. Ruth continues to be an active member of the club, enters the annual shows and won our most recent project plant competition.

— Submitted by John Hersey of Burbank African Violet Society

Ruth (left) with Burbank Mayor Sharon Springer. Photo by Wanda Penner of Burbank AVS.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

***Streptocarpus* 'Heartland's White Gold'**

Exhibited by: Mary McFarland
Hybridized by: D. Martens
Best *Streptocarpus*
2019 AVSA National Show

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

***Streptocarpus* 'Ladyslipper Blue Ice'**

Exhibited by: Randy Deutsch
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Standard

It's Really "Elemental"

By Dr. Jeff Smith Muncie, Indiana

Email: jsmith4@bsu.edu

Have you ever wondered about the "stuff" that makes up your African violet plant? You likely know that plants are living organisms and are made up of units called cells. But what are cells made of? Plant cells are made of a variety of large molecules such as carbohydrates, proteins, lipids and nucleic acids. Each of these molecules are in turn made of various chemical elements such as carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen.

These elements and a few others have mass, occupy space and make up the "matter" that we call an African violet. However, less than one-fourth of the known chemical elements in the periodic table are necessary to make an African violet. The purpose of this article is to discuss which chemical elements are needed and how they are important in African violet growth.

Macroelements and Microelements

A common way of categorizing the chemical elements needed by plants is by the quantity of the element found within the plant. These elements fall roughly into two groups: macroelements and microelements (see Box). As the name "macro" implies, a plant needs these elements in large quantities. A mnemonic for the macroelements is C HOPKNS CaFe Mg or C. Hopkns Cafe is "mighty good." Please note that HOPKNS is spelled without an "I". The element "I," or iodine, is not an element that plants usually need. "Café" is a combination of the chemical symbols for the elements calcium (Ca) and iron (Fe). "Mighty good" stands for the element magnesium (Mg). This mnemonic is a close approximation of the amount of each element found in plants, with carbon being the most common by mass or weight and magnesium being one of the lesser macroelements.

The microelements don't have a convenient mnemonic because the specific elements used in various plants can change depending on the species. Microelements also are known by the term "trace elements" because only small amounts, or traces, usually are needed for growth and health. Some of the microelements needed by African violets include: cobalt, copper, zinc, manganese, chlorine and sodium. Some species of plants require other elements from the periodic table such as selenium, nickel, and silicon, but African violets seem to do fine without these elements.

Elements Needed by African Violets

Macroelements – "C HOPKNS CaFe Mg"

C - Carbon
H - Hydrogen
P - Phosphorus
K - Potassium
N - Nitrogen
S - Sulfur
Ca - Calcium
Fe - Iron
Mg - Magnesium

Microelements (Trace Elements)

Co - Cobalt
Cu - Copper
Zn - Zinc
Mn - Manganese
Cl - Chlorine
Ni - Nickel

Element Sources

African violets obtain their elements from three sources: air, water and soil. Carbon dioxide taken in through photosynthesis is fixed into the carbon and oxygen found in carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and nucleic acids. Water is broken apart during the light reactions of photosynthesis, producing hydrogen ions that are fixed into molecules. The remaining

elements such as nitrogen, calcium and iron are obtained from the soil by the plant's roots.

None of the other elements, such as potassium or calcium, are obtained as pure elementals from the soil. These elements come from charged atoms known as ions. Atoms with a positive charge such as potassium (K^+) are known as cations. Atoms with a negative charge such as chloride (Cl^-) are known as anions. Fortunately, water is a polar molecular and has areas that are slightly positive and other areas that are slightly negative. Therefore, water is very good at dissolving both cations and anions and making them available to roots.

Fertilizers

Although the elements necessary for growth often can be found in soil or dissolved in water, most African violet growers supplement the elements available to their plants by applying fertilizer. Most growers use a water-soluble fertilizer that they add to the water they give their plants. Plant fertilizer should not be called "food" for plants. Food refers to large molecules such as carbohydrates and proteins. Plants are unable to use these molecules. Instead, fertilizers contain various salts of the chemical elements needed for plant growth.

There are many kinds of plant fertilizer and most growers prefer certain brands and types. However, nearly all plant fertilizers are formulated to provide the plant with the elements nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (N-P-K). The fertilizer usually shows the strength of each ingredient with a series of three numbers such as 7-9-5. The numbers represent the relative percent or availability of the nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (in that order). A mnemonic for remembering the order of the fertilizer elements is "Never Pester Kids," using the chemical symbols for nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.

Nitrogen

Nitrogen (N) often is considered the most important of the three elements found in plant fertilizers. Nitrogen makes up 78 percent of the Earth's atmosphere, but this nitrogen is in the form of N_2 gas, making it inert and unavailable to plants. To be usable, the nitrogen usually needs to be in one of three forms: nitrate ion (NO_3^{-1}), nitrite ion (NO_2^{-1}) or ammonium ion (NH_4^{+1}). Nitrate and nitrite ions are the most preferred nitrogen forms because they do not affect the water acidity, or pH. Ammonium ion can make the water strongly alkaline, or basic, and damage the root cells; it should be used only in low concentrations.

> A mnemonic for remembering the order of fertilizer numbers is "Never Pester Kids."

Another form of nitrogen commonly found in fertilizer is urea. Easily obtained from urine, urea is a good source of nitrogen if there are soil bacteria present to break down the molecule releasing ammonium ion. However, since most African violet growers use artificial soil mixes for their plants, the necessary bacteria to break down urea might not be present, making this form of nitrogen effectively unavailable for the plant. Growers should carefully read the ingredient list before choosing a fertilizer and make sure that the nitrogen form is not mostly urea and unusable to their plants. Fertilizers containing nitrogen as mostly nitrate or nitrite or that have a low ammonium level are preferred.

Phosphorus

Phosphorus (P) also is not applied to plants as a pure element and usually exists in fertilizers as P_2O_5. The ratio of phosphorus to nitrogen is important in a plant's growth response. If the two elements are in a 1:1 ratio, such as in a fertilizer that is 3-3-3, the plant will be encouraged to continue in vegetative growth and produce new leaves. If the ratio is higher in phosphorus compared to nitrogen, such as in a fertilizer of 3-12-16, an African violet will switch from vegetative growth to flowering.

Some fertilizers exaggerate this ratio into very high phosphorus such as 12-55-6. Such fertilizers often are known as "blossom boosters" or "super bloom

formulations." These fertilizers should be considered as finishing products for promoting heavy bloom production in show plants. They are not intended as regular-use fertilizers over long periods. Long-term use will stress an African violet and might cause the plant to die.

Potassium

Potassium is known by the chemical symbol K from the Latin word "Kalium," the Medieval Latin word for potash. The chemical form of potassium usually found in fertilizers is K_2O. Potassium is an electrolyte that helps to maintain the ionic balance in plant cells. This ionic balance is important to water movement in the plants, causing water to move from areas of high concentration of water (low number of ions) to areas of low concentration (high number of ions). This ionic balance is partly responsible for moving water (and dissolved ions) from the roots into the leaves and flowers.

Another important use of the ionic balance is to move water into plant cells, expanding their vacuoles and overall cell size. Plant leaves, for example, make only a certain number of cells. The change in size of a young leaf is not so much a matter of making more cells, but more a result of adding water to the cell vacuoles to inflate and increase the size of the existing cells. Plants with insufficient electrolytes such as potassium have difficulty increasing their leaves to maximum size.

It also helps to know more about how African violets use the elements, which I'll address in a future article, along with how much fertilizer to use. Growing African violets doesn't require extensive chemistry knowledge, but understanding the chemical elements in fertilizers can make a big difference in how your plants grow. After all, it's really "elemental."

Mag's Cher Amour

Exhibited by: Marge Farrand
Hybridized by: M. Farrand
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Nancy Demers

Exhibited by: Wilhelmina Allen
Hybridized by: N. Demers
Miniature Trailer

African Violet Terms: Growing and Showing

As we get ready for spring shows, it's helpful to know some of the terms used in grooming plants and judging. Good luck to all exhibitors!

AVSA Handbook for Judges & Exhibitors: This handbook contains the rules and regulations for African violet shows, judges, judging, plus other valuable information for exhibitors.

Plant Terms

Condition: The cultural appearance of a plant, including an exhibit at the time of judging.

Crown: The head of the plant above the soil line. African violets are described as having single or multiple crowns.

Disbudding: Removal of the flower buds or bud stems to delay blooming for a later time.

Double-potting: The placement of a plant, still in its smaller pot, within a larger pot with the space between the two pots filled with soil mix.

Flared-top pot: A pot designed with an extended lip that serves as an additional support to the foliage.

Floriferousness: The quantity of bloom on a plant.

Neck: A plant that has lost leaves from the lower portion of the plant, exposing the main stalk above the potting mixture.

Plant types: African violet plant types include miniature, semiminiature, standard, trailer and large.

Rosette: A cluster of leaves radiating symmetrically from a central stem.

Slip-potting: Placing a plant into a clean pot of the same size to hide any disfigurement or dirt on the pot.

Sport: Plants that have developed new features not seen in the parent plant. This can occur naturally or be chemically induced.

Sucker: The beginning of a new plant that forms near the base of a plant or in the lower axils.

Symmetry: The degree of perfect duplication and overlapping of the foliage evenly spaced around the main stem of the plant. It includes straight petioles with each layer of leaves progressively larger than the preceding layer.

Show Terms

AVSA Standard Show: A show sponsored by one or more AVSA Affiliate clubs that conforms to requirements set forth by AVSA for points scales and judging.

Commercial Horticulture Division: Members who sell African violet plants and supplies (when an affiliate show has no commercial division, AVSA Commercial Members can enter any class in the show; they also can enter the Design Division in any show). Commercial Members exhibit specimen plants or display tables and showcases.

Design Division: Exhibits of artistic and creative use of African violet plants and blossoms. Typically includes Interpretive Flower Arrangements, Interpretive Plant Arrangements and Container Gardens.

Horticulture Division: Plant exhibits, including all plant types, species and gesneriads (other than African violets). The division also includes African violet plants in special containers (unusual, decorative or novel).

Schedule: The "law" of the show, or basic requirements, such as required divisions (for national show) of amateur horticulture, design, special exhibits and commercial horticulture. Affiliate shows do not require a commercial horticulture division.

Special Exhibits Division: Exhibits provide information on propagation and culture of African violets, source of help on Affiliate activities, and AVSA. The division is required in national and affiliate shows.

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Jersey Snow Flakes

Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner
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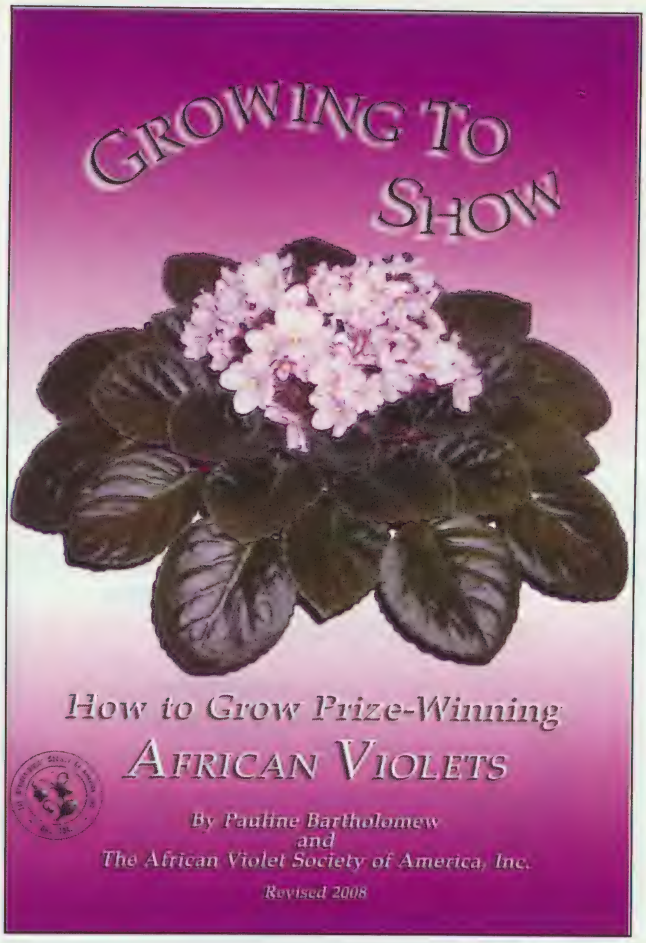

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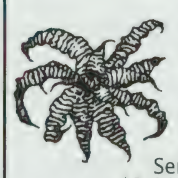

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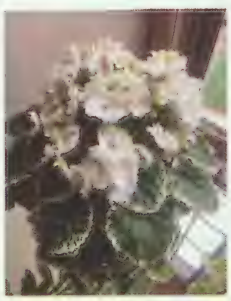

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FEATURES

Vote for AVSA Directors 6
2020 Vacation Guide—Linda Hall 10
Passing the Buckeye—Teresa Odle 12
What's in Your Soil Mix and Water?—Karyn Cichocki 16
Senior Judges: Important Notice—Barbara Werness 23
Surviving "AVPTSD"—Rich Follett 26
Article Contest Update 27
Best Varieties Voting Open—Trudy Brekel 28
Terrarium Toppers/ Thrift Shop Treasures—Carol Bruce 31
More Ideas for Club Programs—Christy Boothe 32
Tips/Techniques: Baby Steps 34
Violets on Cruise Control with Technology—Rhonda Eggimann 36
Bloom Stem Propagation—Kit Love 38
It's Really Elemental, Part 2—Dr. Jeff Smith 42
Buckeye Cryptogram—Josh McKinney 45
Integrated Pest Management—Stephanie Suesan Smith 46
Tips/Techniques: Leaf Problems 47
How I Became Interested in African Violets—Maryann McClellan 48
Creative Ways to Get Through this Spring—Teresa Odle 50
Endowment Funds Help Secure the Future of AVSA 54
African Violet Photography: Camera or Cellphone?—Neil Lipson 56
Digital Photography Terms 58
Buckeye Cryptogram Key 60

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Hunter's Remember When—Ken Muzalewski . . 8
Design: The Dolphin Dance—Danny Tidwell . . . 9
Design: Rodeo—Fran Russom 9
Senk's Anemone—Sam Cunningham 18
Senk's Fruit Fly—Wilhelmina Allen 18
Buckeye Center of Attention—Linda Lloyd 19
N-Korolevichna—Penny Smith-Kerker 19
Design: Energy—Danny Tidwell 25
Design: Football—Elmer Godeny 25
PT-lunaia Pastushka—Kathy Hajner 29
Hunter's Chipmunk Cheeks—Mary Corondan 35
Hunter's Muy Grande—Wayne Geeslin 35
Design: In a Nutshell—Anne Nicholas 40
Design: Flamenco Dancer—Danny Tidwell 40
S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397—Belinda Thibodeaux 41
S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237—Debbie McInnis 41
Cirelda—Sandra Skalski 49
Happy Cricket—Debbie McInnis 49
Mary Craig—Wayne Geeslin 52
Mag's Molten Magic—Marge Farrand 53
Hunter's Twilight Glow—Ken Muzalewski 59

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser 3
Editor's Notes—Teresa Odle 4
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 14
Coming Events 20
Shows and Judges Committee—Mary Corondan 22
Family Portrait—Paul Kroll 24
Registration Report—Joe Bruns 28
Affiliate Update—Jeri Anderson 30
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 34
Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 55

CONVENTION

AVSA 2020 Convention Announcement 5

African Violet Society of America

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Index Of Advertisers

African Rainforest Conservancy 63
Amazon Smile—AVSA ..... Inside Back Cover
American Orchid Society ..... Inside Back Cover
AVS of Canada 62
AVSA Drinkware 44
Cryptanthus Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 62
Gesneriad Society 63
Glenda's House of Violets 62
Growing to Show—AVSA 63
Hobby Greenhouse ..... Inside Back Cover
Indoor Gardening Supplies 63
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery ..... Inside Back Cover
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 62
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 64
Physan 20 64
Swift Moist-Rite Planter 61
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Peddlers Plus 64
Violet Supply 62

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

Most of our members now have heard news regarding the AVSA 2020 Annual Convention and Show that was to be held in Little Rock this month (see page 5). Affiliates also were cancelling their spring shows. I want to thank everyone involved in these tough but necessary decisions and again wish all of you continued health and safety. The Executive Committee is looking forward and I appreciate members' patience as AVSA committees and staff adapt and meet this challenge while planning ahead as we prepare to celebrate AVSA's 75th Anniversary.

Stephen Covolo has been appointed as the new Chair of the Membership and Promotion Committee. Thank you, Stephen, for accepting this position.

AVSA recently received the final distribution from the estate of Hans Inpijn. Hans made a bequest in his will to the AVSA Tinari Endowment Fund. The initial distribution grew the Tinari Fund to the point at which interest can be used for AVSA's daily operations. Further information about the Tinari Fund, the Barbara Burde Fund and the AVSA Legacy Society can be found on page 54.

Office Update

The AVSA Office is beginning to work under the "new normal." Soon it will be completely restored thanks to you, our generous members. Amy has developed new routines in the recently leased office space. New membership database software will help bring the office back to full functionality. Your President and Second Vice President went to the Office in March. While there, we met Amy's new part-time assistant, Stephanie, who helps with data input. This enables Amy to continue to work on maintaining AVSA operations.

We have purchased new iMIS membership database software, a laptop computer, a telephone and other technology-related items using donations from the Office Disaster Appeal fund. We will list an accounting of these purchases in a future issue of the *AVM*.

Nominations and Elections

We planned to elect five new directors at our Little Rock Convention. Thank you, Randy Deutsch and members of the current Nominating Committee, for your work submitting this slate. Learn how you can vote this year on page 7.

A new Nominating Committee will be elected soon for the 2021 office slate. This committee will be responsible for seeking nominees to fill a slate for your vote. The officers they nominate will be elected at the 75th Anniversary Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2021. The committee will seek nominees for directors, Third Vice President and Secretary. Directors are elected for a three-year term. They must attend the annual Board of Directors meeting, which is held on Wednesday of convention week. The term for these positions is two years but the Secretary may serve more than one term. If you have a desire to serve AVSA, please consider submitting your application. The forms are available on the AVSA website.

We appreciate all our volunteers and would like to say a great big "thank you" for serving AVSA. If you have time and special talents you would like to share with AVSA, please feel free to contact any of your officers and share your information and expertise with us to help your AVSA be the best it can be.

If you have a suggestion or concern, or just would like to share a good idea, please feel free to contact me because, after all, communication is the key to making AVSA all it can be. Please remember through our continuing two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Editor's Notes

By Teresa Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

I've got some good news for AVSA members. The AVSA Executive Committee has approved a trial of a digital (PDF) version of *African Violet Magazine* for our members. We are testing the logistics with our international members (for whom the magazine currently takes much longer to reach) first and will look forward to their feedback. Once we have feedback, the AVSA Membership Committee, chaired by Stephen Covolo, will propose how to proceed.

Please rest assured that as we introduce the digital issue to all members, **every** AVSA member will continue to receive both a link to the PDF and a mailed magazine. The membership committee will consider several future membership options and pricing from which members can choose. Eventually, AVSA will roll out these options and all members can make an individual choice.

Benefits of a Digital *AVM*

Many members have been requesting a digital version of *AVM*. Here are some reasons why you might enjoy having bonus access to a PDF of each issue:

- The cover list of inside articles and Table of Contents will link to the page on which the article or advertisement appear.
- Readers should be able to link directly to any email address or website listed within articles.
- Readers can click on links in our commercial members' advertisements to go directly to advertisers' online links or email addresses.
- A PDF is searchable, so if you want to find information on fertilizer, for example, you can type the word into the search bar and see every mention of it in that issue.
- A PDF is a common type of file that is easy to read on most devices using free software or apps.

... every AVSA member will continue to receive both a link to the PDF and a mailed magazine.

Stay Tuned

After our international test, I will work with the membership committee and leadership to set up next steps, hopefully proceeding with digital and print copies of the magazine for all members for the July/August issue. Once members have a chance to try out the digital version, options might include a new "green" membership for new or existing members who want to receive their magazine only digitally.

We know many of you prefer to hold the magazine in your hands, and you can continue to read only the print magazine if you like. Receiving both a print magazine and a PDF is the best of both worlds! We will keep you posted on this new member benefit and how it might add to future membership options.

Thank you to our international members and the membership committee for helping make this new member benefit happen. I look forward to hearing from our U.S. members in future months.

P.S. We caught up on all news we could for this issue. Our printer had reduced staffing due to COVID-19. We apologize if the magazine reached you a few days later than normal.

AVSA 2020 Convention Announcement

Dear Members,

On March 20, the African Violet Society of America Executive Committee announced the results of a telephone conference call to discuss cancelling the 2020 Convention and Show in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Considering the evolving global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the many restrictions imposed by federal, state and local authorities, your AVSA Executive Committee voted to **cancel our May 24-31, 2020, Convention at the Little Rock Marriott**. There will be **no National Show this year**. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided guidance with respect to gatherings of 10 people or more in the United States, saying these gatherings should be canceled or postponed. Although our convention was nine weeks out, we felt that it was in the best interest of our membership to cancel this year's convention.

The Little Rock Marriott has been generous by confirming a 2022 date to reschedule this year's convention and show. Kathy Lahti, convention director, will be working with them for a rebooking date. The Marriott hotel has informed us that they will work within their reservation system to notify each member who has reserved a room of the cancellation of the Convention. We have updated convention registration forms and links on our website. Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager, will issue full convention registration refunds as soon as possible. Please be patient.

We hope you understand our rationale for making this decision. The health and welfare of our members is of the utmost importance to us and we are committed to your safety.

The health and welfare of our members is of the utmost importance to us.

In summary, here is what you can do:

- Mark your calendar now for the 2022 Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- Watch for updated information in the *AVM*, on the AVSA website and on social media.
- Please direct questions to President Sue Ramser, your other Executive Committee members, Convention Director Kathy Lahti, or Office Manager Amy Carruth.

We at AVSA want you to be safe, stay healthy, and practice physical distancing, which includes social distancing, and to follow the direction of your local governing agencies. Remain connected to your family and friends in a manner that meets your needs and theirs.

We must continue to remember that African Violets Continue to Connect Us even through this coronavirus pandemic.

Sincerely,
Sue Ramser, President
Susan Anderson, First Vice President
Mary Corondan, Second Vice President
Glenda Williams, Third Vice President
Terri Post, Treasurer
Winston Goretsky, Past President

Vote for Your AVSA Directors

Cancellation of our 2020 Annual Convention and Show means the AVSA Annual Membership Meeting will not be held on May 30 as planned. Each year, AVSA elects its slate of board members at the meeting. This year, we are asking members to vote by mail or online (see next page) by May 30, 2020.

Since you won't get to meet up with any of our director candidates, we're providing a brief summary of the slate of directors who are up for three-year terms beginning May 31. If you want to know more about any of the candidates, see page 12 of the March/April issue of *AVM*.

Douglas Allen
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Director

Douglas is retired from the automotive industry. He has been a member of AVSA since the late 1980s and began attending AVSA conventions in 2001. He has served on the AVSA Board in past years and continues to be an active member of the AVSA Finance Committee. He and his wife, Lynn, are members of the Town and Country and Michigan State clubs.

Dr. Minh Bui
Rockville, Maryland
Director

Minh has a doctorate degree in plant genetics and works for the National Institutes of Health as a senior scientist in the cancer field. He began growing African violets in 2017 and joined the local Baltimore club in 2018. In 2019, he became a lifetime member of AVSA. He is active in the Mid-Atlantic AV Society and Baltimore African Violet clubs.

Winston J. Goretsky
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Director

Winston is a native of Calgary and an AVSA Past President. He has been active in AVSA since 1982 and a Life Member since 1986. He is a Master Judge and has served on numerous committees, plus continuing to serve as the official photographer for *AVM*. In addition, he is active in the African Violet Society of Canada and the Gesneriad Society.

Nancy Hayes
Hartford, Connecticut
Director

Nancy is a retired nurse who worked in several areas of care, including hospice nursing. Nancy has grown African violets for more than 60 years. She also has attended 50 AVSA conventions. In addition to serving AVSA, Nancy stays in touch with her children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Sandra Skalski
Mullica Hill, New Jersey
Director

Sandra has a bachelor's degree in biology and bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering. She began her interest in African violets at a local show in spring 1990. She joined the club and AVSA that same year. Her collection has grown to more than 300 plants and she has won show awards at the local and national levels. She writes the beginner grower column for *AVM*.

AVSA Will Host Virtual Convention

Our annual meeting was canceled, but we've been working hard creating a way to get together from a safe distance, learn a little and share some photos. Be sure to check frequently on our website (www.avsa.org), watch for notices in *AVSA News* (and subscribe at www.avsa.org if you haven't already) and follow our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/AVSA.org) for more information.

The more members who participate, the more fun this will be. Be ready for activities like:

- Photo galleries of your show-worthy plants.
- A virtual show schedule with a few "topical" themes.
- Photos of new introductions from hybridizers.
- Links to an "online salesroom" from AVSA Commercial Members.
- Society and *AVM* awards announcements.
- A few online workshops courtesy of scheduled presenters and technology.

And more! We'll be getting together on the AVSA website the week of May 24 to 31; we hope to see you there.

Vote by Mail Ballot

This year, we must elect our slate of directors by mail or email (election@avsa.org). Be sure to cast your vote for the slate of AVSA directors by May 30, 2020.

If voting by mail, send your "yes" or "no" vote and membership no. to: election@avsa.org by May 30.

If voting by mail, simply fill in and copy or cut out the ballot below and mail it to AVSA, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX. Your ballot must be postmarked by May 30, 2020.

2020 AVSA Election Ballot

I approve the 2020 slate of director candidates as listed on page 6 of the May/June issue of *African Violet Magazine* and have no write-in nominations:

_____ Yes _____ No

If voting "No," I propose the following write-in candidate:

_____

AVSA Member No. (see outside white cover address label):

_____

Mail ballot to:
AVSA, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX. Must be postmarked by May 30, 2020.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Hunter's Remember When

Exhibited by: Ken Muzalewski
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

The Dolphin Dance

Exhibited by: Danny Tidwell

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rodeo

Exhibited by: Fran Russom
Best Interpretive Plant Arrangement

2020 Vacation Guide

By Linda Hall Ravenwood, Missouri

These AVSA commercial members would be happy to have you visit them when you are traveling in their area. They are listed here by state. Please carefully note the contact information, hours and whether visits are by appointment only. Enjoy the education and inspiration that visiting these businesses will afford you!

Florida

The Peacock Cottage
Laura and Frank Perdomo
3243 East Silver Springs Blvd.
Ocala, FL 34470
352-624-0116
E-mail: the peacockcottage@gmail.com
Open Monday-Saturday 10-6, closed Sundays.

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MrsStrepStreps Supplies plusPlants
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Tucker, GA 30084
770-939-5289
E-mail: mrsstrepstreps@comcast.net
By appointment only; call to schedule visit.

About 14 miles east of Atlanta. My basement is waiting for you. Large amount of growing supplies – 5 sizes of pots, bulb pans, trays, domes, plus many more items with more being added. Supply list available via email. Plus many types of other gesneriads – Streptocarpus, Primulina, Kohleria, Alsobia and more genera in the family.
eBay store: http://www.ebay.com/str/mrsstrepstrepsplantsandsupplies

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David Harris
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Springfield, MO 65804-0220
417-887-8904
E-mail: plantman57@att.net
By appointment only.

Sinningias, African violets and other gesneriads.
www.davesviolets.com

New York

Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc.
Paul Sorano
14 Mutchler St.
PO Box 249
Dolgeville, NY 13329
315-429-8291
E-mail: info@lyndonlyon.com
8 a.m.-4 p.m. (Mon –Fri)
10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sat)
Noon-4 p.m. (Sundays, May and June only).

African violets, gesneriads. Located just 10 minutes off I-90 in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains.
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The Violet Barn
Ralph and Olive Ma Robinson
7209 County Road 12
Naples, NY 14512
585-374-8592
E-mail: comments@violetbarn.com
Shop and greenhouse open noon-5 p.m.,
Wednesday thru Friday, year-round,
weekends by appointment.
Closed major holidays.

African violets, gesneriads, begonias, terrarium plants and supplies.
www.violetbarn.com

Texas

Glenda's House of Violets/Ambrosia Violets
Glenda Williams
829 Old Highway 20, Unit B
McDade, TX 78650-5265
512-988-1918
E-mail: ambrosiaviolets@gmail.com
Visitors always welcome by appointment only-please call/email to schedule visit.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/ambrosiaviolets

JoS Violets
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Victoria, TX 77901-4474
361-575-1344
E-mail: plants@josviolets.com
Visitors by appointment, Tuesday or weekends are best.

African violets, other gesneriads and supplies.
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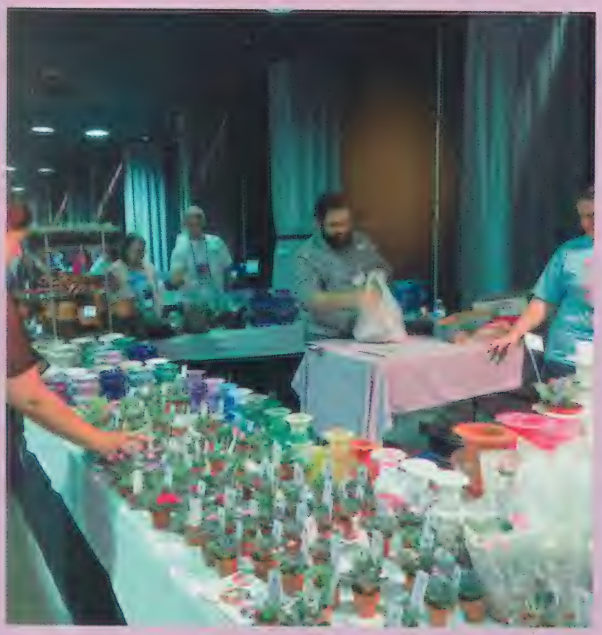
Miss the Sales Room?



Missing the convention sales room? Once you can travel safely, be sure to visit one of the AVSA Commercial Members listed in the vacation guide. You also can visit all Commercial Members "virtually" by phone, email, Facebook, or their websites. See their advertisements on pages 61 through the back cover.

Passing the Buckeye

By Teresa Odle

In February, we heard that Pat Hancock, long-time hybridizer of Buckeye and Jitterbug violets, was selling her business. Within a few days, the owners of Violet Peddlers Plus announced they had bought the business from Pat with the motto "Keeping the Buckeye and Jitterbug tradition alive!"

Susan Miller (left) and Nancy Haffelder (right) are ready to continue the Buckeye tradition.

Violet Peddlers Plus also is based in Ohio and was formed by long-time growers (and sisters-in-law), Susan Miller and Nancy Haffelder. "Word got out earlier than we planned," says Nancy.

Although they just started the business and all it entails in February, they already planned to attend the AVSA 2020 Convention and Show in Little Rock. That meant setting up all the new shelves in their growing areas, keeping Pat's baby plants thriving and setting lots of leaves so Buckeye fans could buy some of their favorite varieties.

Violet Peddlers Plus also is based in Ohio.

Pat first met with Susan about buying the Buckeye business. "I was willing, as long as I had some help," she says. "Nancy first thought she would be a helper, and soon became a willing partner," Susan adds. They make good partners, since the two have known each other for 48 years; Nancy is married to Susan's brother Jack.

About Susan and Nancy

Susan, who has been married to her husband, Gary, for 32 years, has grown African violets for decades. While living in California in the 1980s, she had a small African violet business and was a member of a local club. She carted more than 200 African violets from California to Ohio when she moved back there in 1987. Susan started a new African violet club in her Ohio town and expanded her business for a few years. "It was during that time that I met Pat Hancock," says Susan. She went to Pat's home to purchase plants for an upcoming violet sale at a local mall. "That was my first experience with Buckeye violets," Susan says. Nancy met Pat a few years ago at the Mansfield, Ohio, violet show. "I also am a member of the African Violet Society of Dayton," says Nancy.

"When I lived in Texas, I grew some hybridized mini violets," says Nancy. Susan also supplied her with plants, and her collection and skills grew after she also moved back to Ohio. Susan continued to mentor

Nancy on African violet care. "To date, I have 208 personal violets," Nancy says. She has a fascination with Russian violets because of their large blooms. In addition to Buckeyes and Jitterbugs, "Pat had a ton of Russian varieties," says Susan. Naturally, both Nancy and Susan love Buckeye violets.

Their decades of growing African violets and attending local shows together, plus their business skills, complement one another as business partners. Nancy had a career in the travel industry and Susan has run three booths at an antique mall for 15 years. "I still work two days a week as an interior decorator," she says. Susan has the African violet business experience and Nancy is savvier on social media; she has been busy creating a Facebook page and other ways to contact Violet Peddlers Plus.

Setting Up the Business

Growing African violets is old hat to Nancy and Susan. Hybridizing is a little newer, but they've been watching and learning from Pat at their club meetings and already are trying their hand at it. If successful, a seedpod they have started will be their first Buckeye hybrid. Nancy especially loves the technical aspects of growing and hybridizing. "It's a learning process all the way around," says Susan. She and Nancy ask only for patience as they build the business and the plant supply.

If successful, a seedpod they have started will be their first Buckeye hybrid.

When we spoke, Susan and Nancy were busy getting the business set up from all sides — setting leaves and growing plantlets for upcoming shows, organizing the materials and collection they brought from Pat's in several trips, and setting up marketing and sales. They've joined AVSA as commercial members, created an ad and business cards, and were getting as many plants ready as possible for the spring shows. "For this first year, we plan on having leaves and plantlets," says Nancy. "We don't expect to have the volume Pat had in our first year," she adds.

After all, these are "big shoes" to fill; they don't expect to match Pat's 50 years of growing and decades of hybridizing immediately. But they are determined to maintain (and even expand) the Buckeye and Jitterbug lines. Pat, who is doing fine but ready to make more time for herself and family, continues to mentor them as they get started, which has been a huge help.

The Violet Peddlers Plus growing area already is full of Pat's plant stands and gorgeous plants.

"We are excited about keeping Pat's Buckeyes, Jitterbugs and Russian varieties going," Nancy and Susan say. And African violet lovers could not agree more.

Be sure to contact Susan and Nancy (violetpeddlersplus@gamail.com) and find them on Facebook (@Violet peddlersplus) to welcome them and look for your favorite Buckeyes and Jitterbugs.

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Indiana Academy, Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

While reading the questions that are asked on the various African violet Facebook interest groups, I've noticed many recent posts are about diseases and pests. Though we always have had challenges in growing African violets, there seems to be a recent increase in the number of people who have reported losses of collections due to a disease or pest. Sometimes, a commenter asks why we don't have African violets that are more disease and pest resistant. Hybridizers have improved all kinds of important plant crops for more disease and pest resistance, so why hasn't the same thing happened with African violets? I will discuss some of the reasons in this column.

Q: How would a hybridizer breed for a disease-resistant plant?

A: The classical way to hybridize for disease resistance would be to expose many different genetic types of plants to the disease, find those that survive, and breed the survivors together. The problem with African violets is that the amount of genetic variability in the plants is deceptively shallow. Although we have many kinds of foliage, plant growth forms, flower types and colors, etc., these genetic traits usually are simple variations on the basic wild plant type. Yes, botanists recognize several different African violet species, but these plants are so closely related to each other that they usually can freely hybridize together if given the opportunity. DNA studies of the wild species also have concluded how closely the plants are related to each other. In short, the amount of genetic diversity within African violets is actually small. Trying to find a new trait for disease or pest resistance will be extremely difficult and unlikely. The amount of genetic variation needed for a successful disease or pest resistance breeding program is just not there in the wild plants.

> Hybridizers are less likely to keep seedlings that show problems ...

Q: Surely, with all of today's thousands of cultivars, aren't there some with traits for disease or pest resistance?

A: African violets mutate or sport easily, so it is rational to believe that somewhere there is a plant with a disease or pest resistance trait. The problem is identifying the plant with the trait. Growers with large collections that suffer a catastrophic failure due to a disease or pest are the people most likely to find a resistant plant. Once a disease or pest sweeps through the collection, make a careful study of any surviving plants. The survivors might have just been "lucky," but their survival might be due to some hidden trait for resistance. Using the survivors as the parents in hybridization could allow selection for genetic resistance. The problem is separating "luck" from a trait for "resistance."

An example is how some African violets react to powdery mildew. This fungal pest of flowers is a problem under certain cultural conditions. Control is best accomplished by avoiding the environmental conditions that favor the growth of the fungus. However, many growers have noted that some cultivars seem to attract powdery mildew like magnets while the plant right next to it on the same shelf has no problem. Growers who have recurring problems with powdery mildew could hybridize together the plants that seem most resistant. Hopefully, the offspring

will inherit the same resistance, leading to cultivars that are at least less sensitive to powdery mildew.

I suspect that this type of selection already has been occurring. Hybridizers are less likely to keep seedlings that show problems and those that catch powdery mildew easily have probably been put into the compost piles. The survivors have a higher chance of some degree of resistance and these are the plants hybridizers keep and propagate. This might be unintentionally hybridizing for disease resistance, but it is still a valid example of the process.

Q: Are there other ways to breed plants for disease or pest resistance?

A: Genetic engineering techniques can be used to transfer traits from one species of plant to another. This method is very high tech and beyond the reach of most hybridizers. Genetic engineering usually is the business of large commercial seed companies that develop new food and crop plants. The basic idea is to locate the DNA that confers disease or pest resistance in one species and move it into a new plant. Hopefully the new trait expresses after the DNA transfer and the receiving plant gains disease or pest resistance that it didn't have before. The science of genetic engineering has come far in the past 20 years, but this technology is still out of reach of the casual hybridizer. Even large commercial growers of African violets would be hard pressed to have the resources to pursue a program of this nature.

If I were going to suggest a program using genetic engineering, I might look for a trait that makes a plant unpalatable to pests — something that gives the plant a bad taste, for example. Many plants contain secondary plant compounds that make them dangerous or bad tasting. In a few cases, the DNA for producing the enzymes that make these chemicals is known. Transferring the DNA for "bad taste" would seem to be a good starting place to deter pests for African violets. A plant that is toxic or repellant to thrips would be a nice plant to have in your collection.

Q: Could African violets be sprayed with a nasty-tasting chemical instead of having the plant make its own?

A: This is certainly a possibility. The major drawbacks would be having to continuously replace the chemical as the plant grows and finding a chemical that gives this protection without damaging the plant. A chemical that makes the plant taste bad also is likely to have a smell. That could be a problem for treating plants in your home where strong odors might not be tolerated well.

An example of such a chemical might be the neem oil sprays that some growers use on their plants. Although neem oil probably helps kill pests, the oil also is likely to make the environment of the plant less friendly to pests as well, perhaps giving the plant the equivalent of a bad taste. Insecticidal soaps work in a similar fashion.

Systemic chemicals that are absorbed by the roots and distributed throughout the plant also can help. These chemicals make the plant toxic or bad tasting and discourage or kill pests. There are several systemic products available, but please read all directions carefully before making systemic chemicals a part of your cultural practice. You also must take care in disposing of old soil, leaves, removed flowers, etc., because these materials should be considered "toxic" from the systemic chemicals they contain.

Q: Does the hybridizer of the plant make a difference in the plant's disease and pest resistance?

A: I would think that the hybridizer makes a difference in disease and pest resistance in only an indirect way. Hybridizers release plants that have grown well for them under their growing conditions. Some share plants with other growers before releasing a new cultivar, but most are selecting plants that have done well under their specific growing conditions. This means that a grower who has similar growing conditions will likely have success with this cultivar as well. The plant is already adapted to success if the growing conditions are the same. This might make it appear that the plant has disease or pest resistance.

In general, buying plants from hybridizers who have similar growing conditions to yours always is a good rule of thumb for success. You are much more likely to have plants that will be genetically predisposed to your growing conditions.

Contest Entry —

What's in Your Soil Mix and Water?

By Karyn Cichocki Lafayette, New Jersey

Email: kdco5@ptd.net

In the last issue of *AVM* (March/April 2020, page 48), I wrote about what makes up our soil mixes and finished with my experiments with hydroponic rocks and a gritty mix. I want to mention that those of you who add dolomite lime to your soil mix will want to add some to the gritty mix as well. The pine bark has a low pH, but I would suggest testing the pH of the mix before adding lime. I top-dressed with Espoma rocks to keep the leaves off the potting mix, which I've been doing with *Streptocarpus* to help prevent crown rot.

Testing Soil pH

I've mentioned the pH of soil. I personally don't test my soil mix pH because I repot fairly often. If you don't repot frequently, then the pH of the soil is just as important as the pH of your water. To test soil pH, you need different equipment than that you use to test water. I purchased three inexpensive soil pH testing systems.

Garden Tutor soil pH test strips (l) and a Luster Leaf Rapitest kit for soil pH.

A 3-way soil meter tests soil pH and checks moisture and light levels. You just stick the metal prods into your soil mix, select pH on the meter and it measures pH in the soil. The meter I purchased measured 7 for my soil mix pH. The other two soil tests that I tried were Garden Tutor Soil pH Test Strips and a Luster Leaf Rapitest soil test kit. Both of these are similar to water pH testing systems and involve mixing the soil with water. With the Garden Tutor, you place a test strip in the water. You do the same with Rapitest, but also add powder to the water to make it turn a color. The color of the water (or test strip for Garden Tutor) matches against a chart to show your soil's pH. Both showed my soil had a pH of 6 to 6.5. I purchased all three of these testing methods on Amazon and and each cost less than $15.

Testing Water pH

I feel it is more important to test the pH of your water since it is more likely to change, even if you have well water. Some pet stores will test the water for you for free, but there are inexpensive test kits that you can purchase. I have used a Susswasser pH Test Kit, which is fairly easy to use and can be purchased online or from a pet store. You place your water in a tube provided and add the included indicator solution. Then place the test strip in the water and match it to the color chart provided. This kit also includes "pH up and down" solutions to correct the pH of your water.

My water tested between 7.4 and 7.6, but has tested as high as 8 in the past. I had on hand some Hydrion Insta-Chek paper strips, which involve putting the test paper into the water for a few seconds and then comparing it to the chart provided. My water tested 8 with this test. I also had purchased an Oakton EcoTestr pH2+ meter, which gives a digital reading and is supposed to be very accurate. It involves conditioning the electrodes on the meter before use, and I'm not sure that I did

Susswater color chart (top) and pH up and down solutions.

that correctly, since it gave a reading of 4 for my water. The cost of this meter is about $60, so it is not the cheapest, nor for me, the easiest to use.

If your water source is a public water authority, you contact them and find out what they use to treat the water. Many now are using chloramines instead of chlorine. With chlorine-treated water, all you had to do was fill up your water jugs and wait 24 hours for the chlorine to dissipate from the water. This won't work with water that has chloramines because they do not dissipate from the water like chlorine. To remove the chloramines from the water, you have to have several charcoal filters or get a water conditioner sold in the fish area of pet supply stores. If you have a reverse osmosis (RO) sys-tem, then the filter system removes chloramines.

Types of Water

I've heard growers say they use rainwater, but I would urge caution about using it on African violets, especially if you live in or near a metropolitan area. It might have acid rain and you wouldn't want to water your plants with it. In addition, when rain runs off a roof, the roofing materials or debris can change the pH of the rainwater. I would recommend testing rainwater pH before each use.

Distilled or RO water are fine and should have neutral pH. You can purchase products to bring the pH of your water up or down; adding vinegar also can work, but I found that for my water, adding one-fourth teaspoon of Miracle Gro Tomato Fertilizer brings the pH down to 6.5 to 7, so I can lower the water's pH and fertilize with one product. (I test the pH of the water before and after adding fertilizer, which is recommended when you add anything to plant water.)

Again, when you try something new, take a suggestion from someone who has learned the hard way — don't do so with your entire collection. Change one thing at a time and try it on a couple of plants (use duplicates of plants in your collection to ensure backups in case something happens). Wait at least two months to determine whether your change is working for your plants.

A 3-way soil meter (l) tests soil pH, light and moisture. The Oakton meter tests pH of water.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Senk's Anemone

Exhibited by: Sam Cunningham
Hybridized by: R. Follett/D. Senk
Best Novelty/Unusual
Saintpaulia Foliage

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Senk's Fruit Fly

Exhibited by: Wilhelmina Allen
Hybridized by: R. Follett/D. Senk
Miniature Trailer

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Buckeye Center of Attention

Exhibited by: Linda Lloyd
Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

N-Korolevichna

Exhibited by: Penny Smith-Kerker
Hybridized by: N. Berdnikova
Miniature

Coming Events

Many spring African violet shows and sales are being cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus. This list represents those shows that still were scheduled on our website as of April 1. Be sure to check the AVSA website Events page (www.avsa.com/events) or with the local organizers for the latest information.

May 2 — Connecticut
AVSA Judging School
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broadstreet
Windsor, CT
Nancy G. Hayes, Teacher
860-242-0162; cell: 860-930-6260
9 Cobblestone Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002
violetnancy@comcast.net

May 2 — New Jersey
Garden State African Violet Club
Show and Sale
Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor, NJ
Noon-4 p.m.
Paula Bal
GSAVCmail@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/Garden-State-African-Violet-Club-174125625957229/

May 8-9 — Maryland
Baltimore African Violet Club
65th Annual African Violet Show and Sale
Joppatown Flea Market
1000 Joppa Farm Road, Joppa, MD
Friday: 9 a.m.-6 p.m. (sale); 1-6 p.m. (show)
Saturday: Show and sale, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
Shirley Huffman: 301-854-2021
bshuffman2@aol.com
Wanda Trimnal: 410-913-8583
WandaT@aol.com

May 9 — New Jersey
African Violet Club of Burlington County
Annual Show and Sale
Medford Leas Retirement Community,
Arts and Social Wing
1 Medford Leas Way
Medford, NJ
Noon-5 p.m.
www.facebook.com/AVCLUBURLINGTONCO/

May 16 — California
Southern California African Violet Council/
Burbank & Montrose African Violet Societies
Judged Show & Sale
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Descanso Gardens (Van de Kamp Hall)
1418 Descanso Dr., La Canada, CA
Laura Carpenter: 661- 940-3990
Luis Pineda: 323-236-0104
Burbankafricanviolets.weebly.com
Montroseafricanviolets.weebly.com

June 30-July 4 — Florida
Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society
The Gesneriad Society 2020 Convention
St. Petersburg, Florida
333 1st Street S, St. Petersburg, FL
Friday: 9 a.m.-6 p.m. (sale); 2:30-5:30 p.m. (show)
Saturday: Show and sale, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Mary Helen Maran: gesneriadregistrar@gmail.com
https://www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2020-convention-st-petersburg-fl

September 12 — Georgia
African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta
Show and Plant Sale
North Decatur Methodist Church
1523 Church Street
Decatur, GA
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sue Myers: 630-319-3155
avclubofga@gmail.com

September 18-19 — Ohio
Ohio State African Violet Society
Annual Convention Show and Sale
Kingwood Center Gardens
50 Trimble Rd., Mansfield, OH
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sales); 1-5 p.m. (show)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (show and sale)
Mel Grice: 937-654-7014
melsgrice@gmail.com
http://osavs.org/

October 3-4 — Minnesota
North Star African Violet Council
AVSA Judged African Violet Show and Plant Sale
Bachman's Floral Gift and Garden, Heritage Room
6010 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Mary Kealy-Falk: mkealyfalk@aol.com
nsavctc@gmail.com

October 9-10 — Nebraska
Missouri Valley African Violet Council
Fall Show and Sale
Ramada Inn, 72nd and Interstate 80, Omaha, NE
Friday: noon-5 p.m. (sales)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (show and sales)
Randy G. Deutsch: 605-321-0717
rcjsch@prodigy.net
MVAVC.org

Canceled or Postponed Shows

Some of these events might have been canceled since this issue of *AVM* went to press. Be sure to check on the AVSA website (www.avsa.org/Events) or with the listed contacts for the latest information on canceled or postponed shows. Watch for rescheduled and virtual shows, including a national virtual show, on avsa.org.

Affiliates that must cancel their event and have paid for the SSA packet will be allowed to use their approved show schedules next year with no additional fee, if the show is rescheduled and will use the same show schedule. When the event is rescheduled, affiliates may submit an updated cover page that includes the new date and location information to the Show Schedule Approver.

Join AVSA for our 2020 Virtual Show. See details on page 7.

Shows and Judges Committee

By Mary Corondan, Chair

Email: judges@avsa.org

Spring shows always are a highlight of growing African violets and gesneriads. See page 21 for information on submitting show schedules for rescheduled shows.

Show Schedules

When writing your show schedules, please remember to update the terminology. Some show schedules still are using the phrase, "Gesneriads without bloom." Instead, the schedule should state, "Gesneriads grown for ornamental qualities other than bloom." The latter puts the class in a more positive perspective.

Blue Ribbons

There are quite a few judging school students who are taking their judge's exam without having the required blue-ribbon count. Monitoring this has become quite a task. As always, teachers should let me know each student's test score, along with information on whether the student has presented proof of blue ribbons or not. Upon the writing of this column, I am asking that teachers keep a record of those students who have not obtained their blue ribbons and report back to me when those ribbons have been earned, rather than to have the student contact me directly.

The blue ribbons should be acquired within one calendar year of when the student passed the judge's exam. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent this from happening, the teacher should contact me directly. A judge's card will not be issued to the student until the exam has been passed and the blue-ribbon requirement has been met, along with any other certification requirements. I appreciate the help of all teachers in monitoring these issues.

Let's stay excited about summer or fall shows, rescheduled shows and upcoming national conventions and shows.

The blue ribbons should be acquired within one calendar year of when the student passed the judge's exam.

If your local affiliate canceled its spring show and your show schedule had been approved by Susan Anderson, you may reuse the same theme and show schedule next year without submitting it to be approved again in 2021.

Next year, merely send the revised cover page with corrected dates to Susan Anderson, Schedule Approver. Keep the SSA packet and rosettes you received this year for use in 2021, and you will not need to purchase a new packet or purchase new rosettes.

Due to the large number of canceled shows and judging schools, Student and Advanced Judges whose certificates expire in 2020 will have their certificates extended until 2021. If you would like an updated judging certificate, contact Mary Corondan, judges@avsa.org or 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview TX 75069.

Senior Judges: Important Notice

By Barbara Werness

Phone: 763-754-3918 • Email: bwerness@comcast.net

Senior Judges may apply for a renewal examination between May 1 and September 1, 2020. Here's how:

Send request to **Barbara Werness, 12354 Naples Street NE, Blaine, MN 55449.**

- Include a check for $5 payable to AVSA and proof of three blue ribbons as per *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, 2016 edition, page 83.
- Cash, personal checks or cashier's checks are acceptable. Note: Sorry, but we can no longer accept Canadian postal money orders.

You may receive the examination by email as a Microsoft Word document. ***If you do not receive the message, follow up within two weeks.*** If you require a hard copy by postal mail, allow up to three weeks for delivery. Please specify email or hard copy.

You must return a **printed hard copy** (*not* electronic copy via email) of the exam to Barbara Werness by October 1, 2020, for grading.

Advanced Judges who meet the requirements and wish to apply for their first Senior Judge examination can send a request and $5 check payable to AVSA to Barbara Werness.

Also send the following items of documentation of eligibility per the AVSA Handbook:

1. List of all judging schools attended, grades, etc.
2. Signed schedules of five AVSA shows judged (copy of signed title page with all show information is sufficient.)
3. Verification of three blue ribbons earned per AVSA Handbook, 2016 Edition, Page 83.

Allow three weeks for delivery. Schedules and cards will be returned if an SASE is included with proper amount of postage. Applications postmarked after September 1, 2020, will be returned and application may be made next year.

No exams will be returned until after October 15, 2020. Please include an email address and you will be notified of receipt of your exam, or include a self-addressed postcard and it will be returned upon arrival of exam.

Family Portrait: *Amalophyllon clarkii*

By Paul Kroll

5953 Broadway, No. 128 • Lancaster, NY 14086
Email: pfkroll@me.com

Amalophyllon is a genus of small, low-growing herbs, usually with white flowers. Several species originally were classified in the genus *Phinaea,* and recently have been reclassified into the genus *Amalophyllon*. The plants are found in Central America growing in moist, humid environments near the mouths of caves or beside streams and rivers. Their rhizomes are small and vary in color.

Amalophyllon clarkii has green rhizomes approximately the size of a grain of rice. This species was named in honor of John Littler Clark, who discovered the plant.

The tiny rhizomes of *Amalophyllon clarkii*.

The leaves of *A. clarkii* are an attractive light green, with brown veins and a striking lacy edge. The plant needs to be grown in humid conditions. I have always grown mine in terrarium conditions and have had very good luck with it. The blooms are quick to fade, but there are many of them. I have detected no scent.

This attractive plant may be used in container garden plantings, such as in a terrarium, provided the humidity is sufficient. Because of its fern-like appearance, *A. clarkii* provides texture and color variance. Its small size makes it easy to tuck into crevices.

Its small size makes it easy to tuck into crevices.

A loose, well-drained soil kept moderately moist is sufficient for this plant to do well on your light shelves. It will flourish and bloom under two T8 or T12 bulbs, even near the end of the shelf. Regular fertilization, such as the routine enjoyed by your African violets, will help this plant to perform for you.

Amalophyllon clarkii exhibited by Sue Smith at the Toronto Gesneriad Society show. Photo by Mel Grice.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Energy

Exhibited by: Danny Tidwell

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Football

Exhibited by: Elmer Godeny

Contest Entry —

Surviving "AVPTSD": How I Got my Mojo Back

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

My journey through African violet post-traumatic stress disorder ("AVPTSD") began on a Wednesday night nine years ago when I was tending my collection to escape the "Hump Day" blues. As I worked my way through a tray of starter plants, I noticed that the stems on one plant had turned mushy and brown. Shrugging my shoulders, I tossed the plant in the trash and continued. By the next week, there were a dozen more just like the first; more followed daily as I raced to find out the cause.

The culprit turned out to be impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV), verified by testing, and I lost my entire collection of more than 2,000 plants, lovingly collected over a decade — many of them gifts from people I had come to know and love as friends. I was traumatized and despondent. I would have called it a nightmare, had it not been real. I decided that I would have no further involvement with growing African violets. Too ashamed to discuss my INSV experience with other growers, I simply faded away, leaving the African violet community without explanation. My light stands sat empty. I did not even open the door to my plant room for more than a year after INSV invaded.

Faltering Resolve

In time, I gave away my light stands and distributed supplies among friends, telling my story to a trusted few. Some of them tried to talk me into growing again but I kept hearing a voice in my head saying "No, you'll only kill them." From time to time, I would see neglected African violets at the local Walmart and think they couldn't possibly be any worse off with me than they were there, withering in the store. Still, I did not yield.

It wasn't until just over a year ago that my resolve faltered. That is because a friend from our local community theater posted on social media that she had divided her enormous African violet into more than a dozen babies and was asking if anyone would like to have one. The picture that accompanied the post showed all the African violet progeny, neatly lined up and planted *in clay pots!* Somehow, seeing those defenseless plants in so much peril broke through my barriers and I agreed to pick one up the following Saturday morning.

The culprit turned out to be impatiens necrotic spot virus.

This African violet is like the kind that first attracted me — a generic light purple standard windowsill dweller, sturdy as a farm truck and tolerant of varying conditions and occasional memory lapses that result in inconsistent culture. Rather than bringing it home, where my tragedy had occurred, I brought it to my high school English classroom, where it burst into bloom seemingly overnight despite its clay pot. My students began asking questions immediately.

After a few weeks I decided to show them how to root leaves, which turned out to be a brilliant success. Once the violet became part of our classroom culture, my students wanted more, so I ordered a few different starter plants — a mini, a trailer and a few with interesting leaf types and variegation. Now, the plants and my students are growing together.

An African violet grows happily in my classroom.

Finding My Mojo

My journey back to growing and loving African violets has not been without its failures. All of the leaves I helped my students put down sent up babies in record time, but most of my own efforts at school or at home have led to dead plants. A friend sent me a coveted trailer, which arrived in sterling condition. I could not keep it alive for even a month.

> I am finding my mojo once again and picking up speed.

There is no question that my former enchantment — my "AV magic," as I used to call it — still is dormant. That being said, I am finding my mojo once again and picking up speed. In recent months, I have ordered a new LED light stand (which I planned to set up over spring break from school), rekindled the once-defunct African violet club that I had founded in 2002, reconnected with a few grower friends, and made reservations for the (now canceled) 2020 National Convention. Day by day, I am recovering from the terrible darkness that overtook my African violet life almost a decade ago. It is wonderful to be back among my old friends, both plant and human, and as I rediscover them, I find that I am rediscovering myself.

Article Contest Update

Congratulations to Bill Chaney, whose article "An Ounce of Prevention Is … the Key to Healthy Plants!" won the article contest for the March/April issue of *African Violet Magazine*. Bill will receive a new crown or plantlet and will be entered for the year-end award, which will be decided after selection of the May/June contest winner. Pat asks for winners' patience; she planned to mail prizes as soon as the weather warmed and the virus spread declined.

We plan to continue our article contest into 2021, so keep submitting those great articles. We have some guidelines to help on the AVSA website (www.avsa.org/magazine). Just email your article to editor@avsa.org and mark it as a contest entry. You also can mail articles to: Teresa Odle, PO Box 1828, Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346.

> We plan to continue our article contest into 2021, so keep submitting …

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Naoto Kamihigashi — Chiba-shi, Chiba, Japan

Naoto-K
•(11248) 12/08/2019 •N. Kamihigashi
•Single chimera white sticktite pansy/dark blue stripe.
•Medium green, plain, wavy. •Standard.

Kathy Hajner — Peralta, NM

K's Angel's Share
•(11249) 1/26/2020 •K. Hajner
•Single-semidouble light pink pansy/white eye, purple fantasy.
•Variegated medium green and white, quilted, serrated. •Standard.

K's Fiesta Lady
•(11250) 01/26/2020 •K. Hajner
•Single-semidouble pink frilled pansy/lavender fantasy.
•Variegated medium-dark green, white, cream, and pink, serrated. •Standard.

K's Shenanigans
•(11251) 01/26/2020 •K. Hajner
•Single-semidouble pink pansy/darker eye, purple fantasy.
•Medium green, quilted, serrated. •Standard.

The 2020 Best Varieties Voting Is Now Open

By Trudy Brekel Email: violetlady7@msn.com

It's time to vote for your favorite African violets! The AVSA Best Varieties List for 2020 won't be complete without you. We will include all nominations submitted by July 31, 2020, in the list. The Best Varieties report will appear in the November/December issue of the *African Violet Magazine*.

To vote online at www.avsa.org, log in as a member and choose "Member Content" from the list on the left side of the screen. Select "Best Varieties Submission" and choose "Best Varieties Online Submission." Enter up to five different varieties, along with your name, and click on the "Submit" button. You also have the option of printing the form, filling it out and mailing it in.

Enter up to five different varieties ...

You can mail votes to Trudy Brekel, 5553 W. Prentice Cir., Littleton, CO 80123. If you want to email a list or attachment, send it to violetlady7@msn.com.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

PT-lunaia Pastushka

Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner
Hybridized by: D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva
Standard

AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson, Affiliate Chair

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

The Local Clubs area of the AVSA website is almost up to date. There are only seven clubs left that have not updated their club information. If your affiliate is one of those without an update date, please take the time to do a club update via the AVSA website. Just click on "Local Clubs" on the left menu and you will see the area for Local Club Update. It only takes a few minutes and helps people looking for an African violet club in their area find your club.

Affiliate Committee

Cristy Boothe has joined our Affiliate Committee. Some of you already might be acquainted with her through Facebook. She is actively collecting program ideas for articles in our *African Violet Magazine* (see page 32). As the AVSA website gets updated, we hope to have an area where we can post these ideas for club members to reference. The AVSA Affiliate Committee now has the following members: Jeri Anderson, Chair; Julie Jones, Vice-chair; Brenda Petry; Lorna Russell; and Cristy Boothe.

Social Media Affiliates

For those of you who belong to an African violet group on social media, did you know you can have your group listed on the AVSA website? Go to the very bottom of the Local Club listing on the AVSA website and you will see a separate "Virtual Affiliates" box; click on "Online groups." The top of the page has a link to learn the details of how to register your group as a Virtual Affiliate of AVSA. It's an easy way to advertise your group to visitors of the AVSA website and maybe pick up some new members.

Each year, once the excitement of growing and showing at our affiliate meetings is over, it's easy to just slow way down for summer. But this is not the time to quit having meetings. It's too easy for members to drop out over the summer and not return in the fall. If you keep meeting through the summer, you have a better chance of retaining your members. Our summer and virtual meetings can be more casual, with no club business, so vacationers don't miss any club news. The summer meetings can have an activity that is violet related or not; get together for lunch; visit a botanical garden or a nice nursery. It's just a fun way to keep your group together.

New and Forming Clubs

The **Houston African Violet and Gesneriad Society** of Texas has become an AVSA Affiliate. Welcome!

We have a long list of members working to start a club:

- Carolyn Most: Santa Rosa, CA; Email: carolyn.most@gmail.com
- Cherie Przymus: Cheyenne, WY; Email: clprzy@gmail.com
- Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY; Email: missjeannae@yahoo.com
- Mary Ann Markey: Port Charlotte, FL; Email: drmaogrady@gmail.com
- Tommy Harrelson: Wilmington, NC; Email: tommy1999harrelson28@gmail.com

Hopefully, someone will be interested in joining a club in one of these areas. If you are trying to start a new club in your area, please contact the Affiliate Chair for help. There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club.

Terrarium Toppers/ Thrift Shop Treasures

By Carol Bruce Las Vegas, Nevada

Email: Needlesongs@cox.net

You just found the perfect bubble bowl or brandy snifter for a terrarium, but what do you use for a lid? Plastic wrap? Maybe a clear glass plate perched precariously on top?

Even better, check out the nearest thrift shop for mismatched glass casserole lids. I took a quick trip to several shops in my area and found that every shop had a half dozen glass lids with metal rims, all priced for less than $2. I even found a sale and bought three for 74 cents each.

The lids are just right unless they have bulky utensil-style knobs. Easy fix! Unscrew the hand-tightened knobs and replace them with pretty ones from the hardware store. When buying new knobs, remember to also buy a shorter knob screw (one-half inch worked on all of mine) and rubber or nylon washers to fit. My glass lids all had holes with different diameters. Be sure the washers are wide enough to cover the holes without being squished through.

Before adding the new knob, consider whether you prefer the lid to be dome shaped or inverted. After trying my lids both ways, I decided on the inverted orientation.

My finished terrarium with an inverted lid and new knob.

Remember that the lids may not be airtight, so continue to monitor humidity levels in the terrarium.

While at the thrift shop checking out lids, don't forget to look for other violet goodies. On a recent trip, I found both a large bubble bowl and a large brandy snifter, fancy ceramic pots, a dish for a dish garden, clear glass jars for mini-terrariums and several plastic trays.

A thrift store lid and new knob and hardware for an easy terrarium topper.

Contest Entry —

More Ideas for Club Programs

By Cristy Boothe Cordova, Tennessee

I reached out to AVSA Affiliates a few months ago to learn some of their clever and effective ideas for club activities and programs. In the March/April issue of *AVM* (page 46), I shared ideas for games and road trips. Here are more great ways affiliates are engaging current and new members.

Expert Help

Games are fun ways to learn and interact, but sometimes we must get serious again. Holly Walker from the Granite State African Violet and Gesneriad Society in New Hampshire reported they invited an entomologist from the University of New Hampshire to come to their meeting. The entomologist helped club members identify the types of bugs found on plants and in the soil. It is critical to properly identify a pest and determine whether it is a "beneficial" bug or one that needs a chemical treatment. If it does, growers need to understand the proper chemical and dosage to use if pests are present. So many of us look through our microscopes and see various bugs but can't really identify them. It's a great idea to ask an expert for help!

A University of New Hampshire entomologist visited the Granite State club to talk about and identify insects. Photos by Holly Walker.

The Memphis African Violet Society reported that member Mike Ramsey gave an outstanding presentation on LED lighting. The club decided to make it into a Facebook Live event to share Mike's expertise on this subject. Mike covered all the details and was able to interest those growers who are into the technical side of the hobby, as well as those who just need to know what lights to purchase and where to purchase them!

Judy Niemira from the African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Western New York shared the club's list of programs from several years past. They had an amazing list, including hands-on programs like separating baby violets and "ER" for plants, with members bringing in plants that needed help. A month before their show, they featured a last-minute show preparation program that included grooming, packing advice and schedule help.

Attracting New Members

By consistently advertising your club activities and programs, you can generate interest in the community. Bubble gardens and terrariums are nice environments for African violets. How about a program on putting together a cute little bubble garden or terrarium where the members (or potential members) bring their own container? Members could donate small plants to use and perhaps the club can provide items such as charcoal, perlite and small pebbles or stones for decoration.

Many of us realize that to keep our fun hobby going and growing, we need to attract the younger generation at some point. Myra Lader of the Yuma Orchid and African Violet Society shared several ideas that included education for young people, as well as activities for seniors. Their past club President, Rodney Hartleib, created a PowerPoint presentation and showed it to a group of young 4H members to introduce them to African violets. After the presentation, each child received small violets and a violet leaf

started in a mini terrarium made from a plastic water bottle so the students could watch them grow into a nice new plant.

Rodney and the club gave the same presentation to a group of seniors at an assisted living community and club members donated violets to all seniors who attended. Myra added that the club's main fundraiser (and community activity) is to sell African violets and orchids at their city's home and garden show each year.

A Silent Auction

Memphis African Violet Society recently held a silent auction. Members brought baby plants, leaf pots, leaves and any "surplus" violets they had taking up precious real estate on shelves at home (you know you have some, too). On a sheet of paper, they listed the African violet's name, bloom color and any other characteristics. Each slip of paper included 10 to 15 numbered lines for members to list their bids on the plant. The bidding started at 50 cents, or $1 for larger plants.

Memphis club members were given time before and after the business meeting to make their bids by recording their name and the price they were willing to pay. Another member could then come along and outbid that member. However, the first bidder could then go back and outbid the second one, and so on. Once time was called, the member with the highest bid won the item and paid the club's treasurer. After collecting all the money, the membership decided to match the funds raised and send the total to AVSA to help with the disaster flooding at the office. Win, win for everyone!

> The club decided to make it into a Facebook live event to share Mike's expertise ...

So, does this have you thinking of how you can create some excitement in your next program or club activity? Even holding a brainstorming session at your next meeting might bring some unique and clever ideas, and once you get going, more and more ideas surely will come!

Left: Yuma 4H Club members are introduced to African violets. Pictured from l to r: Claire Pilkington; Quinn Sellers; Quinn's sister, Logan Pilkington; and Rodney Hartlieb. Right : All 4H club members went home with a small African violet and leaf start. Photos courtesy of Karen Bowen.

JOIN TODAY!

The African Violet Society of America

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Beaumont, Texas 77720
(409) 839-4725
http://avsa.org
Write or call today for information

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: winners@avsa.org

First Lakeland AVS, FL — Winners:
•Best Standard: Harmony's Little Stinker; Best in Show/Best Species: S. 5g clone *pendulus* var. *kizarae*; Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Carol Ann Burrell**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Silver Skies', **Nancy Crites**.
•Best Design/Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Jane DiLorenzo**.

Tampa AVS, FL — Winners:
•Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Shirl's Hawaiian Lei, Orchard's Wonder Twin; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Antique Rose, **Glenn Shelton**.
•2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Allegro Pepto Pink, Jolly Fire, Ness' Satin Rose, **Mary Beth Bryant**.
•Best Standard: Rhapsodie Clementine; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Peggy Walbel**.
•Best Gesneriad: *Gloxinia erinoides*, **Nancy Kast**.
•Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden**.

Tips and Techniques: Baby Steps

When you perceive a problem with your African violets, plenty of reasons rush through your head or on Facebook group responses. So, how is the best way to address possible cultural methods or changes? The short answer? One step at a time:

•Make changes to watering, soil mix and other features of your growing environment gradually. Take baby steps so you don't shock your plants or cause a cultural break.
•Likewise, address only one element (such as watering, lighting or potting mix) at a time. If your changes work (or set the plants back), it is tough to pinpoint the reason if you change more than one element at a time.
•You've heard it before, but it bears repeating: Test any new soil additive, fertilizer or watering method on a few plants at a time.
•It's probably best to separate those plants. In other words, don't try the new method on every plant of a single variety or even every mini or trailer. Mix it up and compare the plants in which you made the change with your "control group" of plants using your former methods.

Finally, you often get several different answers when posting questions online. You are better served by checking the AVSA website (avsa.org/learning), previous issues of *AVM*, or asking a trusted fellow club member first. Send a few photos and background to the friend by text or, after social distancing, invite the experienced grower over for a "dessert and diagnosis" visit.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Hunter's Chipmunk Cheeks

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Hunter's Muy Grande

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Large Standard

Contest Entry —

Violets on Cruise Control: Automating Cultural Controls with Technology

By Rhonda Eggimann Henderson, Nevada

Email: Rocknrho@yahoo.com

Occasionally we find ourselves away from home for extended periods and tending to carefully curated and precisely primed African violets requires a specialized skill set few babysitters or pet sitters are likely to possess. Before starting my violet collection, I had to consider how practical it was for me, a frequent traveler, to become a "plant mom" and whether I was willing to invest time and energy into a hobby that potentially could be unsustainable. I concluded that if I wanted to "have my cake and eat it too," I would have to create an automated habitat for my plants. Now, I keep my violets happy from afar with the help of a few simple technology tools.

Prepping the Growing Area

The first step I took in preparing the African violets for my absence was equipping them with wicks and water reservoirs, which could provide water and nutrients for days, or even weeks, on end. Next, I assembled a shelving unit and fastened dimmable LED strip lights to the underside of each shelf so every plant would have its own space and light source.

Once those two key plant survival elements were in place, I installed a ceiling fan and stationed a humidifier and space heater to help generate air circulation, humidity and temperature control. Lastly, I needed to address when and how these devices were to operate independently.

Research on Technology Tools

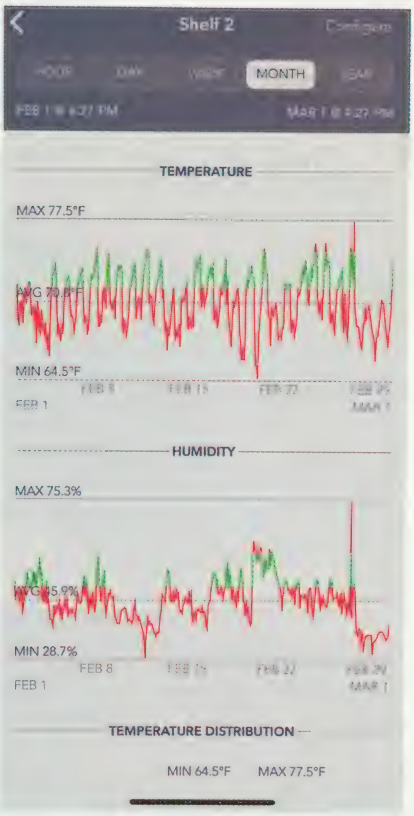
Online research revealed several smart home gadgets and smartphone applications necessary to complete my vision of an auto-pilot environment. A company called SensorPush makes wireless thermometers/hygrometers that communicate via Bluetooth. You can place these small cubes (called HT1 Temperature and Humidity Smart Sensors) virtually anywhere and they are impressively responsive and accurate.

The SensorPush app reports real-time readings and records hourly, daily and weekly levels.

Top: The growing area set up and ready for today's tech tools. Bottom: SensorPush temperature and humidity sensors.

When used in conjunction with the company's optional G1 Wi-Fi Gateway, the sensors can deliver notifications to a smartphone, indicating when the temperature or humidity percentage exceeds the

ranges set by the user. Similarly, an app called Light Meter uses smartphone cameras to measure illuminance in both lux and foot-candle (FC) units to provide guidance for light intensity adjustments. Using both apps provides a basis to optimize a control schedule.



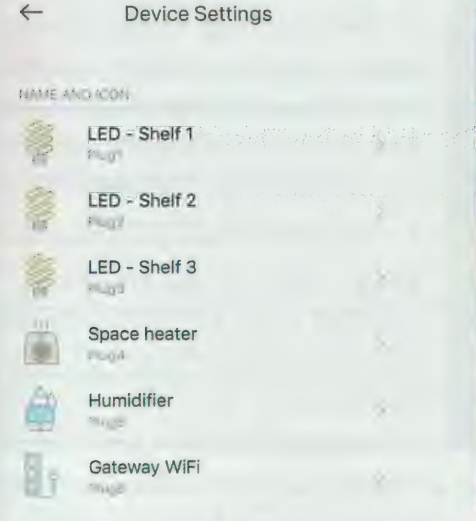
A lux reading from my light meter app (left). The temperature and humidity trends for the growing area displayed on a phone (right).

Power and Control

Kasa Smart Wi-Fi Power Strips accommodated all the electrical connections necessary to complete this operation. I have found the power strips to be safe, reliable and easy to set up. The user can label each outlet on the strip within the Kasa app for clear identification of all devices. The best part is that these power strips are compatible with Amazon Alexa. By placing an Alexa hub in the African violet growing room, all controls are now managed by programmed routines and voice commands. When I am away from home, I can power on or off all the devices individually or as a group. I also can adjust their schedules on the fly from a smartphone or computer. Thanks to the available devices and apps mentioned above, I was able to leave for two weeks and was welcomed upon my return by beautiful blooms on thriving plants.

There are a growing number of apps, technology brands, and electronics to choose from that can help growers devise a custom, automated system to regulate controls and maintain comfortable atmospheric conditions. Homes equipped with basic Wi-Fi should be able to support these aides. As a fail-safe measure, you can strategically place home security cameras that supply live video feeds to ensure nothing has gone awry.

Investing the time to research the ideal products for your specific needs and budget can provide peace of mind when you are away and might even simplify your normal maintenance routine.



Smartphone screenshots (l to r): Kasa power strip labels; Alexa routines; home screen shortcut folder.

Contest Entry —

Bloom Stem Propagation

By Kit Love Odessa, Texas

I've been doing bloom stem propagation for a couple of years now. The beauty of propagating African violets this way is that you get an exact copy (as far as you know) of the mother plant, especially with fantasy-blossom plants.

For those of you who are new to the hobby, the fantasy trait on African violet blossoms tends to degenerate when you use leaf cuttings. We want to keep our beauties for years to come and for future generations to enjoy. I've learned a few things over the past couple of years that might help ensure this happens.

Group of rooting stems.

Bloom Stems in Containers

First, I remove a bloom stem soon after a blossom opens (on the day it opens). I cut a little less than an inch off, cutting the stem at an angle, as you would for leaf starts. I dip the tip of the bloom stem in Clonex Rooting Gel and let the gel dry just a little before planting it in a tiny container. You can use the same technique when propagating chimeras with bloom stems.

Bloom stems do best in very small pots (the less soil, the better). I use three sizes, beginning with one that is only 1.5 inches high. I use communion cups and make a hole in the bottom of the cups with a soldering iron. You can ask your local church where they buy their cups. I then place the small cup into the 1-ounce medicine cup (you can buy these at any medical supply store) and write the name and date on the outside container and transfer it to a domed tray. Later, I transfer the plantlets to the 1-ounce plastic medicine cup with a drainage hole and filled with perlite and soil. Later, when the roots fill the 1-ounce cup, I transfer them to a 2-inch pot with no perlite.

Left: Bloom stem after cut and dipped in Clonex. Right: Bloom stems at various stages.

Tricks Learned the Hard Way

Here are some tricks I learned by trial and error for better propagation success with this method. Sometimes, the stem grows especially long (for no reason that I can understand) and the new plant is

"way out there," even though I cut the stems short at the beginning. Just let the little plant grow for a while until it is big enough that you can cut it off the long stem. Since it will have no roots, cut it loose from the stem to leave a little stem attached and root it in either the communion cup or the 1-ounce medicine cup.

Top: A little plant taken out of the medicine cup (look at those roots). Bottom: The same plant potted up in a 2-inch pot.

Usually, by the end of one month, the plantlets will have filled their 1-ounce cups with roots. This is when you move them up to the 2-inch pot. I use no perlite and put them in the dome for another month. If they do nicely (and they usually do), I take them out at the end of the month and put each into a 2-inch pot with a wick. I start them on fertilizer water at this time and add blue food coloring so I can easily tell the water level. I originally put them in Solo cups with perlite at the bottom and they did not thrive at all; that's when I decided to try something different. I have found that moving them into 2-inch pots makes them thrive!

When you see roots growing out the bottom of the containers, it's time to move the little plants up to 3-inch pots. I "mold pot" them to avoid disturbing their roots. I also insert the wicks, put the plants back in the dome and keep them there until I see new growth.

Top: Plantlets a couple of weeks out of the dome. Bottom: Healthy babies in 3-inch pots.

A Few More Tips

Here are a few more tips to remember:

- Don't let the bloom stems dry out.
- Don't be afraid of a few tiny leaves on the bloom stem; I have had good luck when leaving them on.
- Use plain water for the stems you are rooting (mark your pots to avoid mixing them up) and until you see healthy roots forming, even after potting up to 2-inch pots.
- I use fish fertilizer when watering all of the plantlets that have good roots.
- Doing this takes a little time, but don't lose heart! Keep at it; the reward is well worth it.
- You can find Clonex at hydroponics stores or online; a small bottle lasts a long time.

These little plants usually take off like rockets; you won't be disappointed!

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

In a Nutshell

Exhibited by: Anne Nicholas
Best Design in Show
Best Interpretive Flower Arrangement

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Flamenco Dancer

Exhibited by: Danny Tidwell

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

S. 5c1 clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397

Exhibited by:
Belinda Thibodeaux
Saintpaulia species
Best Species

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

S. 5a clone *grandifolius* No. 237

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
3rd Best African Violet in Show,
Best Species African Violet

"It's Really Elemental," Part 2

By Dr. Jeff Smith Muncie, Indiana

Editor's Note: In the March/April 2020 issue of AVM *(page 56), Dr. Jeff Smith shared excellent information on macroelements and microelements for African violet growth and health. In Part 2, he outlines how plants use elements and the role of fertilizer.*

Element Use and Deficiency

Each element has a particular use or application in plant cells. Nitrogen, for example, is part of the chemical structure of proteins and nucleic acids. Proteins are the working molecular tools of cells and, as enzymes, run many of the chemical reactions within cells. Nucleic acids form cells' genetic material such as DNA and RNA; they also store the information necessary for making proteins and running a cell.

Nitrogen also is an important part of the chlorophyll molecule that traps light and uses the energy to build food and other molecules for the plant from carbon dioxide and water. One of the early symptoms of nitrogen deficiency in plants is that the older leaves break down their chlorophyll and give up their nitrogen to the new young leaves. This results in the older leaves turning yellow and eventually dying. Once the older leaves have become chlorotic (yellow), they usually cannot rebuild the lost chlorophyll they need to turn green again. Only by carefully supplying the plant with continuous nitrogen can growers have large show plants with healthy, dark green old and new leaves.

Phosphorus deficiency often makes a plant reluctant to flower and symptoms might show in the older leaves. Sugars can accumulate in the older leaves, causing them to darken in color. The red backing pigment of anthocyanin compounds commonly found in many African violets also might intensify in color. Although the older leaves are dark green and appear healthy, if the phosphorus deficiency continues, early death of these leaves is common.

Iron is necessary for the enzymes that make chlorophyll.

Potassium deficiency tends to affect younger leaves, causing yellowing at the tips or edges. Dead or yellow patches can develop in the center areas of the leaf, giving it a mottled appearance. In extreme potassium deficiency cases, the plants' growth becomes stunted; they fail to expand to full size and eventually can die.

The deficiency symptoms of other elements such as iron and magnesium show up in the green coloration of the leaves. Iron is necessary for the enzymes that make chlorophyll. Magnesium is at the heart of the chlorophyll molecule. A deficiency in either or both elements prevents the plant from making enough chlorophyll, resulting in less green color. The older leaves might become yellow in magnesium deficiency as the plant breaks down chlorophyll so the magnesium can be used in the younger leaves. Unlike nitrogen deficiency, magnesium deficiency often starts from the edges of the leaves and works toward the veins. In severe cases, the veins can remain green while the rest of the leaf is yellow. Iron deficiency usually affects younger leaves as the plant fails to manufacture chlorophyll. However, leaves also might develop a pattern of green veins with the green coloration failing to move into the areas between the veins.

The similarity of appearance (green veins and yellow inter-vein areas of the leaf) in magnesium and iron deficiencies is an excellent illustration of the difference between "mobile" and "immobile" elements.

Mobile elements can move around in a plant. When the plant detects a deficiency, the materials containing these elements are broken down in older leaves and the element is mobilized, or moved, to the new younger leaves. The plant's strategy is to try to get the new leaves photosynthesizing and keep the plant growing upward toward the light. Both nitrogen and magnesium are examples of mobile elements.

Immobile elements are generally fixed when incorporated into cells and cannot move if a deficiency occurs. Iron and potassium are examples of immobile elements. Another good example is the element calcium. This element is necessary for building cell walls in plants. Once the walls form, they cannot break down to release the calcium. When a calcium deficiency occurs, the newest leaves cannot form cell walls and grow properly, causing stunted and misshapen leaves.

The symptoms of microelement (trace element) deficiency often are difficult to diagnose. Some, such as zinc and copper, are mobile elements but others (such as boron) are immobile elements. Therefore, trace element deficiency can affect old or new leaves. In many cases, the deficiency causes changes in leaf coloration, development of dead or dying areas, or stunted and misshapen growth. Fortunately, trace element deficiency is relatively rare because most fertilizers carry trace elements deliberately as part of their formulation or accidentally as contaminants. Water often contains slight amounts of various trace elements and can prevent deficiencies. However, reverse osmosis water is filtered to remove most chemicals and will not add trace elements to plants. Growers who use only reverse osmosis water must be sure that their fertilizers contain trace elements to avoid deficiencies.

How Much Fertilizer to Use

Most commercial fertilizers come with instructions, usually recommending a certain quantity of fertilizer dissolved in a volume of water that growers use to water the plants. African violets are adapted to growing on rocks or nutrient-poor soils. The wild species plants rarely receive much in the way of soil nutrients and depend on rainwater to wash nutrients from nearby decaying material into reach of the roots. The best way to mimic this delivery system is to use diluted fertilizer solutions that are about one-fourth of the package recommendations, but to use this solution every time the plant is watered. If growers use wick watering, they also should dilute the fertilizer solution to one-fourth of the fertilizer package recommendations. Constant use or "feeding" with a weak fertilizer solution will give the best results. Resist the temptation to believe that if a little fertilizer is good, more will be better. Fertilizers are mixtures of chemical salts and will quickly damage or "burn" the roots in strong concentrations.

Growers who only use reverse osmosis water must be sure that their fertilizers contain trace elements to avoid deficiencies.

Even if you use a weak fertilizer solution, the chemical salts can build up in the soil over time. There typically are two methods growers can try to prevent or minimize the salt buildup. One method is to repot the plant frequently into fresh soil. Some growers repot mini African violets every three months and larger plants every four to six months. Frequent repotting helps prevent the buildup of chemical salts and subsequent root damage.

A second method is to leach the chemical salts out of the soil. This is usually done by flooding the soil with warm water and allowing the excess water to drain out of the pot. Distilled, spring or reverse osmosis water are low in chemical salts and are excellent for leaching salts out of the soil. The plant must not be allowed to sit in the water that has drained out of the pot because the soil will reabsorb the salt-laden water, defeating the leaching efforts. Leaching can be used in place of repotting and saves time and resources to keep the fertilizer's chemical salts from building up and damaging the roots.

Type of Fertilizer

Commercial fertilizers usually are mixtures of chemical salts in an easily dissolved neutral medium that does not contribute to the elemental composition of the fertilizer. Many commercial fertilizers also add soluble dyes to color the solution. The dyes are harmless and do not affect plant growth; they serve only to help growers judge the relative concentration of the fertilizer solution. Concentrated fertilizer solutions are dark in color and weak or more dilute fertilizer solutions are pale.

Some growers prefer one of several organic fertilizers such as fish emulsion, earthworm castings or additives such as blood meal or ground bone. These "organic" fertilizers are not pure chemicals and often contain various trace elements in addition to their N-P-K content. Organic fertilizers usually are slower to decompose and release their chemical elements to the plant, making them less likely to become concentrated and "burn" the roots. Some growers prefer organic fertilizers because they feel these fertilizers are more natural and better mimic the growing conditions of the wild plants. The choice of organic fertilizers vs. chemical salt fertilizers is personal. Both provide the necessary chemical elements to growing plants and both can produce high-quality plants with proper use.

Though African violets really are more than the "sum of their parts," it helps to understand how the chemical elements that go into building a plant can be useful to growers. African violets require only a small number of chemical elements. Knowing which elements they use, how they obtain the elements and the dangers of too little or too much of an element can help produce healthier plants.

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African Violet Buckeye Cryptogram

Special thanks to Josh McKinney for another clever activity to include in *AVM* for our members. This time, it's all about the Buckeyes. Josh created this cryptogram from scratch, and we appreciate him sending it in.

Just use the clues (with numbers filled in) to figure out and enter the numbers in the chart and solve the violet puzzle. All words relate to the Buckeye varieties! See page 60 for answers.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
		17			19		3		21										4				18

1	4	17	6	2	18	2
B	U	C	K	E	Y	E

All varieties prefixed with:

1. C _ _ _ _ _ _ _ Y
   17 20 8 7 1 2 20 20 18

   _ _ A _ _ _ _ R
   9 11 8 20 6 10 2 20

2. N _ S _ _ _ _ I _
   7 16 9 5 8 10 22 12 8

3. _ _ L _ _ _ _ T _ _ N
   17 2 10 2 1 20 8 5 12 16 7

4. D _ _ _ _ _ _ _ O _
   14 2 14 12 17 8 5 12 16 7

5. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ W _ _ _
   17 10 8 20 2 5 13 12 7 2

6. _ V _ R _ _ _ _ _ _ G
   2 23 2 20 10 8 9 5 12 7 22

7. _ _ _ _ _ M
   23 8 23 16 16 15

8. _ _ U _ _ _ Y _ _ _ _ _ _ S
   17 16 4 7 5 20 18 10 12 10 8 17 9

9. _ _ _ W _ _ _ _ _ P _ _ _ _
   14 16 22 13 16 16 14 9 11 20 12 7 22

10. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ D _ _ _
    1 10 4 2 12 7 15 12 22 16

11. M _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ X
    15 4 9 12 17 1 16 24

12. _ _ _ _ _ K _ _ _ _ _
    14 8 15 8 9 6 20 16 9 2

13. _ _ _ _ C _ _ _ _ _
    9 2 14 4 17 5 20 2 9 9

14. _ B _ _ _ _ _ _ _
    16 1 9 2 9 9 12 16 7

Contest Entry —

Before You Spray... Try Integrated Pest Management

By Dr. Stephanie Suesan Smith Dallas, Texas

Integrated pest management (IPM) is the art of using the least toxic alternative to prevent and manage pests and diseases. Sometimes, that means spraying an African violet with a pesticide. Often, it involves nipping the problem in the bud before you must spray. In fact, if you apply IPM principles to your African violet care, you will have better control than you would get just using pesticides.

The three pillars of IPM are cultural controls, biological controls and chemical controls. Each of these pillars plays a part in protecting your violets.

Cultural Controls

Cultural controls are the easiest type of control. Here are cultural control steps that will improve an African violet's life and appearance:

- Water from the bottom of the violet. Water droplets on the leaves can cause burned spots. Many nice containers come with a wick or other bottom-watering system.
- Trim and remove dead blooms.
- Trim and remove dead or diseased tissue.
- Quarantine all new plants for 90 days to make sure they are not carrying pests or diseases into your house.
- Use sterile soil or soilless potting medium when planting or repotting your violets.
- Soak all soiled pots in a 10% solution of bleach and water for 30 minutes to sterilize them before reuse.
- Have a fan running in your violet room to keep the air circulating.
- If you spot a disease or pest on your violet, remove it to quarantine to prevent the problem from spreading.
- When you repot an African violet, discard the old soil, roots, blossoms and leaves in a closed plastic bag. For a drastic restart of a plant, wash the crown in soapy water or a weak bleach solution, blot the leaves and center dry, and plant the crown in fresh soil. Place in an enclosure, out of direct sunlight, while the plant develops new roots.

Putting cultural controls in place helps prevent a problem you must address later.

The three pillars of IPM are cultural controls, biological controls and chemical controls.

Biological Controls

Most people are aware that you can buy predators such as lacewings, lady beetle eggs and other pest-eating organisms to control the pests in your garden. It is possible to buy predators and use them indoors as well. Biological controls work well for the person who has a room full of African violets. Biological controls do not produce immediate results; you must be able to tolerate a low-level pest presence. If you have a heavy pest load and biological controls have not helped, you should consider chemical control. If you cannot tolerate any pests on your prized show plants, it is best to skip the biological controls and move on to chemical controls.

Chemical Controls

Think about the level of pest control you need. Can you tolerate one or two pests per plant, or is any pest damage too much to take? Even if you decide

you can tolerate one or two pests, are they regularly surging out of control? In that case, you will have to use a chemical control.

IPM chemical controls are all about using the least amount of the safest pesticide to eliminate the pest. First, you must identify the pest. Then pick through the controls for that pest until you find the safest product that will work on your pest.

Never resort to spraying everything that moves. Quarantine the affected plants and treat them — while leaving the other plants untreated. That way, the pest cannot spread, and you will not build up pesticide-resistant pests. Pesticide resistance happens when the pest lays eggs in the presence of a pesticide. Most of the eggs die, but some live. Those pests that survive are immune to that pesticide. They might be quite vulnerable to other pesticides. For this reason, you should use different pesticides in rotation.

Before using a given pesticide, read and understand the label. The label is the law. Using a pesticide not scheduled for African violets can kill the plants. Be sure that you stay away from the sprayed violets for the prescribed rest period. Keep children and pets away, too.

Even organic products such as Neem oil are considered pesticides by the agents who enforce pesticide regulations. People are tempted to believe that these are not dangerous because they are organic. This is not always the case. Because of this, you must follow the law when using them.

Want to know what to spray? Because pesticides come and go, I cannot recommend a specific line of treatment. However, contact your county extension agent for options. Once a pest is wiped out, fall back on cultural and biological controls to keep it away.

In summary, IPM is using the least toxic alternative to eliminate pests on your African violets. This keeps you, members of your household, and your violets safe.

Tips and Techniques: Leaf Problems

African violet leaves add to the beauty of the plants we love and they also are important to health. Here are a few tips for problem-solving issues with leaves:

•If leaves at the base of the plant are going soft or rotting, the problem most likely is soil that is too wet. It might be too wet because of overwatering, the watering method you are using or the soil mix. Be sure to follow advice about soil mix based on watering method, such as 50 percent or more perlite in soil mix of plants that are wick watered. When purchasing or making African violet mix, look for or ask about how the mix works for various watering methods. It also can help to adjust watering based on humidity and other environmental conditions.

•If young leaves in an African violet are white, you probably have a variegated variety. The variegation can vary even more based on temperature. Specifically, many variegated leaves are whiter when weather is cool and greener when the temperature around them is warm.

And remember, the green in African violet leaves (or any plant's foliage) contributes to chlorophyll and the energy the plants need to bloom. So, even if you love the color of mostly white leaves, too much light variegation affects plant energy and flowering. It can be challenging to learn how to control the variegation, but there are several methods you can try. See this helpful online answer on the AVSA website (in FAQs).

Contest Entry —

How I Became Interested In African Violets

By Maryann McClellan Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey

Back in 2008, I went to a local craft show in New Jersey at one of the local churches. In the corner was a lady selling African violets. I stopped to chat and admired the colors and varieties of these cute little plants. I continued on with my shopping and eventually came back to their table and purchased a plant. I had never grown an African violet, although I had a cousin who lived in upstate Pennsylvania whom I visited many times; she always had blooming African violets on her counter in the kitchen under a window. So, I bought one and was told it was easy and to enjoy.

I asked if they had any classes on how to grow these plants. She said they had nothing currently, but I could call her any time for information. She also mentioned that they were talking about possibly starting a local African violet club in southern New Jersey in the future. So, I gave them my name, phone number and email address because I thought I might be interested in joining.

I was hooked … well, about nine months later, I got a call from one of the girls I had met that day who said that if I was interested, they were starting a local club in south Jersey. They wanted to educate the public, gather a group of interested flower people, and continue sharing information about African violets. So, off I went to her home and met some women, saw her collection of plants and learned some interesting ideas about growing and caring for African violets.

In September 2009, we held our first meeting of the Southern New Jersey African violet club in Elwood, New Jersey. That was a little more than 10 years ago. We have grown to a regular group of 15 steady, like-minded people who enjoy meeting monthly to grow our plants, have workshops, go to African violet shows, attend meetings, hold raffles and act as speakers for our club. We even have had about seven annual African violet shows and sales. We also now have a Facebook page, an email address and our own African violet club page. We have come a long way since 2009, and I am proud to be a past president.

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One of the nice features of our club is that we have an accredited judge, Donna Brinning, and her mother, Sandy Pine, as our special members. That means we get plenty of critiquing, workshops, programs, plants and events throughout the year. Donna also is teaching her daughters about African violets and they help her with her African violet growing business, Fancy Bloomers.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Cirelda

Exhibited by: Sandra Skalski
Hybridized by: P. Tracey
Semiminiature Trailer

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Happy Cricket

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: Painesville Town & Country AVS/R. Hollada
Large Standard
Best 'Happy Cricket'

Creative Ways to Get Through this Spring

By Teresa Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

This is a tough time for people around the world, and it helps to have some distractions and tasks to get through and keep our minds and bodies busy. African violet lovers also are disappointed in the necessary cancellation of spring shows and our Annual Convention. We can do only so much cleaning or binge-watching television shows. Here are a few African-violet related activities that might help; learn more about many of them in this issue of *AVM*.

Order plants and supplies. We all will miss local and national sales, but we don't have to miss out — the AVSA Commercial Members who typically attend the national convention are open for business since the weather has warmed around the country. Please consider them first when looking for quality plants and supplies. See page 10 for our annual vacation guide listing vendors around the country, our ads on pages 61 through the back cover, and a complete list of AVSA Commercial Members with information and links at www.avsa.org/commercials.

For other items, go to www.smile.Amazon.com. You get the same products and deals here as on amazon.com, but a percentage of each purchase goes to AVSA if you select the society as your organization. So, if you need supplies not available from our Commercial Members, cleaning or other items shipped, you pay no more than you normally would, but help AVSA with your purchase on the Amazon Smile page.

Talk (or read!) to your violet "children." Social distancing can get lonely and we all need someone we can talk to about our feelings. A small study by the Royal Horticultural Society a few years back found that playing recordings of people reading literary or scientific works to tomato plants resulted in a little more growth than on control plants. In particular, those tomatoes read to by female voices grew about an inch taller on average than those "hearing" male voices. The reason is uncertain but is likely related to greater range in pitch in women's voices. So, remember you are not alone.

Conduct that experiment you've always wanted to try... Share your results in *AVM*.

Share photos of your show plants. If you already started a schedule to get your best plants ready for spring shows, keep the efforts going for practice and to share the results online. Keep an eye out for "virtual shows" on AVSA's Facebook page and website.

My Orchard's Bumble Magnet "all dressed up with no place to go."

I learned the hard way how best to handle repotted plants in my dry environment. Enter plastic packing from bed linens and empty boxes.

Recruit at least one new member. You might have watched friends' or family members' eyes glaze over when you talk about your plants. If they have time on their hands, now is the time to get their attention! Get family members who live with you to help with new light stand setups or repotting. Show them photos of plants they might like in *AVM* or online. Drop an African violet off on a neighbor's porch while you're getting air but social distancing. Make calls to recruit a new member or two to your local club and AVSA or get past members excited about attending when activities pick up.

Watch African violet-related videos or DVDs. The AVSA Store is loaded with educational media, DVDs, CDs or thumb drives of past national meetings, books on growing, calendars and webinars. Some of AVSA's top growers have generously contributed to these online presentations and DVDs. We've also partnered with the Gesneriad Society to offer some of their webinars in our store.

Repurpose. If you've resorted to cleaning instead of canceled activities or trips, be sure to save items you might use for your African violets. Our contributors have lots of great tips on reusing household items as watering wells. Save clear tents or plastic covers, salad and takeout containers and other items you might find useful.

Get to know African violet varieties. Most of us turn to First Class to verify information and track our plants. But why not spend some time searching for specific plant features (like red bloom) or specific hybridizers? The AVSA Library Committee also maintains an excellent photo gallery on our website (www.avsa.org/Aphotos). Want to get to know Buckeyes better? Turn to page 45 of this issue.

AVSA Commercial Members are open for business.

Add some technology to your growing routine. Understanding technology does not come easy to all of us, but lots of tools and apps can save time and trouble. Enlist a friend or family member for help and read the article by Rhonda Eggimann on page 46 for some great tech ideas.

Brainstorm new club activities. If your club can't meet this spring, start to brainstorm ideas to get people excited about fall meetings. Cristy Boothe gathered ideas from clubs around the country and wrote about them in this issue (see page 32) and in the March/April issue of *AVM*.

Write an article for *AVM*. Conduct that experiment you've always wanted to try — comparing cultural conditions or products you use for growing. Share your results in *AVM*. Mark your article a contest entry and you will be entered to win prizes. Not sure how to write it up? See our writers' guidelines on the AVSA website's magazine page (www.avsa.org/magazine) for tips.

Most of all, stay in touch with family and friends by telephone, email or Zoom.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Mary Craig

Exhibited by: Wayne Geeslin
Hybridized by: R. Nadeau
Standard
Best Vintage Violet

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Mag's Molten Magic

Exhibited by: Marge Farrand
Hybridized by: M. Farrand
Standard

Endowment Funds Help Secure the Future of AVSA

Endowment funds are a unique way to support AVSA and are particularly useful for providing financial stability to the society into the future. Donations go into a principal fund that is restricted; only the interest generated may be used.

The Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund, named in honor of Anne and Frank Tinari, was created 15 years ago and is restricted to supporting and enhancing the operations of AVSA. The Burde Endowment Fund was created in 2019 and is restricted to supporting AVSA's future technology needs.

Generous Donations

In the past two years, AVSA has been honored and grateful to receive two large donations to AVSA Endowment Funds:

- A bequest from the Hans Inpijn Estate totaled more than $165,000, essentially doubling the principal in the Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund. Hans was born in the Netherlands and died in 2016. He was an avid African violet grower and belonged to many southern California clubs. Three hybrids are credited to him in the AVSA Master Variety List, including Everdina, seen here, which was named after his wife. Hans delighted in attending many annual AVSA conventions through the years.
- Dave Burde established the Barbara Burde Endowment Fund with his donations totaling $65,000 in memory of his wife. Barbara was the chairman of the AVSA Internet Committee when she died suddenly after a brief illness in 2018. She was devoted to maintaining an excellent website for the society and was a notably gracious and dedicated committee chair. She also was a veterinarian, artist, and the president of the Thousand Oaks African Violet Society in California.

The AVSA Legacy Society was created to recognize generous individuals making gifts of $1,000 or more.

AVSA Legacy Society

The AVSA Legacy Society was created to recognize generous individuals making gifts of $1,000 or more. The Legacy Society also recognizes those individuals who indicate that they have included AVSA in their estate planning with a gift of at least $1,000. All members of the AVSA Legacy Society are recognized each year at the closing banquet of the annual AVSA convention.

Everdina, hybridized in 1983 by Hans Inpijn (and Ronn Nadeau) and grown by Debbie McInnis. Photo courtesy of AVSA Library Committee.

Are you interested in making a legacy gift to AVSA? Would you or your club like to help build the principal in one of the AVSA endowment funds? Are you interested in establishing an endowment fund of your own, either through a significant donation or to celebrate a loved one? If you answer yes to any of these questions, please email the AVSA office at office@avsa.org and a member of the Endowment Committee will contact you.

AVSA is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization, and most donations are tax deductible. Donors may learn more about the AVSA endowment funds at http://www.avsa.org/donations.

Legacy Society Donors

Thank you to the generous donors who make up the AVSA Legacy Society, including those listed below. Bequests may be made in one's will or by designating AVSA as a beneficiary in an insurance policy. If you have added AVSA to your estate planning for $1,000 or more and your name is not on this list, please contact the AVSA Office. We will list Legacy Society members again in a future issue of *AVM*.

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Joyce Stork
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Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received in January and February 2020 Total $750

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Helen Schafer

African Violet Photography: Camera or Cellphone?

By Neil Lipson

Email: ndlipson@gmail.com

I was on the African Violet Buddies Facebook page and noticed that the photos of members' violets looked great, with perfect color and good focus. The shadows were rich; the color saturation was perfect. I wanted to find out more about how the photos were taken.

I placed a few phone calls and discovered the images were taken with recent models of cellphones. Considering the surge of advancements in these phones' cameras and capabilities, I felt it would be interesting to compare the photography of these phones with my digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) camera. Here's a comparison of my iPhone 11 cellphone and Canon 80D camera to determine differences and advantages and whether they are noticeable.

Depth of Field

The cellphone photographs were in excellent focus because of the focal length of the phone. The iPhone 11 camera lens focal lengths are 1.54 mm, 4.25 mm and 6 mm. Their 35-mm equivalent focal lengths are 14 mm, 26 mm, and 52 mm, respectively. This means that almost all of a subject from a distance of about one foot to much further out would be in focus.

Depth of field shot of my Jolly Fairy taken with an iPhone (left) and Canon DSLR (right).

> For the average photographer, the cellphone ... can do a great job right out of the box.

The DSLR camera uses an Advanced Photo System (APC)-type sensor, which is far bigger than those on cellphones. Most standard DSLR sensors are 35 mm or the equivalent. The sensor on the iPhone11 camera and other cellphones is much smaller (10 mm square) to produce a large depth of field with most of the photograph in focus.

Automatic Color Adjustment

Cellphones have computers in them to automatically correct color in an image under almost all lighting conditions. DSLR cameras can be adjusted for difficult lighting, and typically are better than cellphones in getting the colors right. That flexibility is intentional for professional and amateur photographers using DSLRs who demand perfect images. However, tweaking the DSLR camera to achieve the correct color is a more demanding task than it is on the iPhone 11.

For the average photographer, a cellphone, especially the newest models of smartphones, can do a great job

right out of the box. The testing service DXO Mark Labs rates the cameras of the iPhone 11 Pro Max, Samsung Galaxy Note 10+, Huawei P30 Pro, and Google Pixel 4 all similarly. I tested only with my iPhone 11, a cellphone I prefer for its software and custom chip design.

Shadow Detail

When photographing African violets for social media or your club activities, trying to get both the flowers and the shadows at the correct exposure on a DSLR can be trying, but my iPhone did this automatically in one step with some complex behind-the-scenes image processing. Put simply, the phone's camera takes a series of nine images, each at a different exposure, and then the built-in HDR (high dynamic range) "Deep Fusion" function on the phone goes to work. It combines the images, producing a final image with wonderful highlights and shadow details.

With a DSLR, this would require up to seven photos and third-party software such as Adobe Photoshop to combine them. This blew me away.

I took this photo of Sharon Gartner with her Best in Show winner (Cajun's Ella Grace) at the Dixie AVS 2019 Convention and Show. Left: Photo taken with iPhone and no flash; right: photo taken with Canon DSLR and flash.

> The cellphone is a worthy stand-in for photos you will share online.

Comparing sensor sizes of the iPhone 11 and Canon 80D that doesn't tell the whole story. For a cellphone to deliver high-resolution images from that small sensor, the pixel distance was shrunk dramatically to 1-micrometer pixel width. For comparison, Canon's 80D 24-megapixel sensor boasts a 3.73 micrometer space between each pixel.

So, what does that mean? If you're aiming to print poster-sized images of your plants, the DSLR photos will look less grainy and can be enlarged and can be enlarged or cropped. The cellphone is a worthy stand-in for photos you will share online. However, there are situations in which you need high-resolution images for a photography task. You will need a true digital camera (DSLR) to take photos that will print on paper at sizes larger than a few inches. Just be prepared to take up to 1,000 shots and spend lots of time going through the images.

Editor's note: Please see page 58 for an explanation of some of the terms used in this article and information for submitting photos to AVM.

Digital Photography Terms

Focal length: The distance between the lens and the sensor, measured in millimeters. A standard length on a camera is 50 mm, which matches our eyes' field of view. Cellphone camera sensors are much smaller, so you have to equate one with a regular SLR sensor. A 4.25 mm focal length on a cellphone is nearly equal to 26 mm on a camera.

Pixel: A pixel is a tiny dot; together the pixels make up an image on a screen or in a file. So, instead of inches (such as 8 x 10), you will see pixel width and height (such as 4032 x 3024). Find pixel numbers under "Properties (details)" or Info buttons of image files, depending on your phone or camera.

DPI: DPI is dots per inch, (technically printer dots per inch). This also is in image properties or info to indicate resolution (for example, 72 dpi, which works well online, or 300 dpi, which works for print).

High Resolution: Cellphones are designed for high-quality online photos. When you need larger files for printing quality photos in *AVM*, posters for educational exhibits, etc., they have to be high in resolution. Digital cameras and cellphones often mention 12 megapixels (MP) as a target size for high resolu-tion. What matters most, however, is the pixel size (see above).

If you plan to print a photo, you can divide the pixels representing the smallest side of the photo (3024 in the example above) by the size you will print it. So, for *AVM*, for example, you need a minimum of 300 dpi at 3 inches wide (about the size of a column width) on the shortest side of an image. That works out to a minimum of 1024 pixels; more is better. The gorgeous full-page images we print in *AVM* are huge, high-resolution files.

Correction for March/April 2020 Issue

Please note an error in the caption of a photo on page 55 of the March/April issue of *AVM*. *Streptocarpus* 'Ladyslipper Blue Ice' was exhibited by our late and beloved former AVSA President, Richard Nicholas. In addition, the hybridizer was listed incorrectly; no hybridizer should be listed for this plant.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Hunter's Twilight Glow

Exhibited by: Ken Muzalewski
Hybridized by: K. Muzalewski
Standard

African Violet Buckeye Cryptogram Answers

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
8	1	17	14	2	19	22	3	12	21	6	10	15	7	16	11	20	9	5	4	23	13	24	18

1	4	17	6	2	18	2
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   9 11 8 20 6 10 2 20 — S P A R K L E R
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- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
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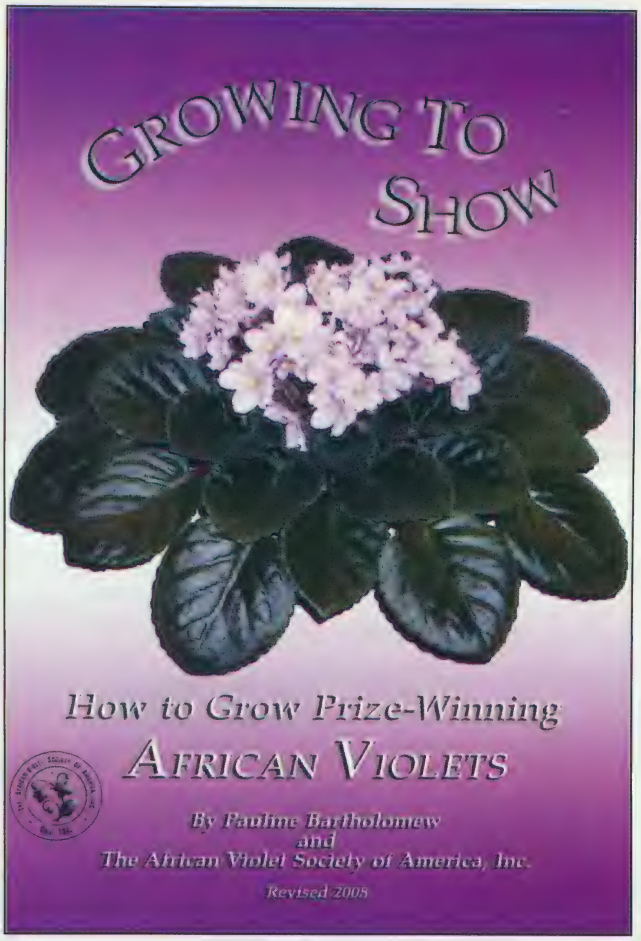

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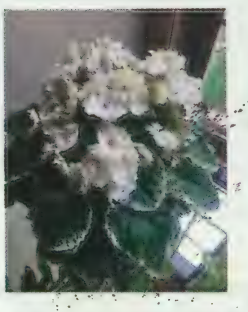

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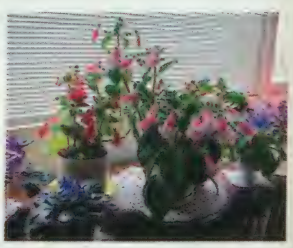

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African Violet MAGAZINE

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AVSA Holds Virtual Convention

Hybridizer Wesley Carter

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African Violet Magazine

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•**AVSA Scholarship Program:** Charles Ramser, 2413 Martin St., Wichita Falls, TX 76308. *Email:* charles.ramser@msutexas.edu.

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•**Future Dates:** Atlanta, GA, May 30-June 6, 2021; Little Rock, AR in 2020. If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Chair.
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•**Commercial Activities, Sales and Exhibits:** For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, 4710 W. Justin Lane, Spokane, WA 99208. *Email:* commercials@avsa.org.

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 73 Number 4

ON THIS COVER:
Ma's King Carnival
Exhibited by: Mary Corondan
Hybridized by: O. Robinson
Standard
Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

FEATURES

AVSA Holds Virtual Convention 10
Cosmic Variegation—Vladimir Kalgin 14
Putting an African Violet to "Sleep"—Rich Follett 22
Interested in Serving on AVSA Board? 25
Hybridizer Wesley Carter—Bill Chaney 26
Air Movement for African Violets—Ray Burnside 30
Club Meetings in 2020—William Patterson 32
Honoring Outstanding AVSA Members—Linda Hall 34
It's Almost Our 75th Anniversary!—Carolee Carter 44
Is Bigger Really Better?—Pat Hancock 48
Naming Cultivars: The Late 1990s—Teresa Odle 50
Got Old Photos? 51
Hudson Award Nominations 53
Digital *AVM* Now Available—Teresa Odle 54
2020-2021 Article Contest—Pat Hancock 56
Congratulations to Contest Winners! 57
***AVM* Article Contest Contributors** 58
African Violets as Inspiration—Minnelli Lucy France 59
Lest We Forget 60

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Milky Way Trail—75th Anniversary 5
Annabelle—75th Anniversary 21
Wesley's Dreamy Lucille—Kristie Moore 29
Wesley's Samwise Salutations—Kristie Moore 29
Streptocarpus 'MK-Markiza'—Sherrie Zimmerman 37
Beginner's Luck—75th Anniversary 42
Rob's Fuddy Duddy—75th Anniversary 42
Ness' Crinkle Blue—75th Anniversary 43
Ness' Satin Rose—75th Anniversary 43
Picasso—75th Anniversary 49
Aca's Libbie—75th Anniversary 55
Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler—75th Anniversary 61

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser 3
Editor's Notes—Teresa Odle 4
My First Violets—Sandra Skalski 6
Barbara Burde Endowment Fund—Randy Deutsch 18
Coming Events 20
Family Portrait—Mel Grice 24
Booster Fund—Dianna Walston 25
Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 31
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 38
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 40
Building Maintenance Fund—Randy Deutsch . . 41
Registration Report—Joe Bruns 52
In Memory 53
Boyce Edens Research Fund—Randy Deutsch . . 57

CONVENTION

New Plant Introductions 9
Virtual Convention Exhibits 12
Virtual Convention Selfies 19
Celebrating 75 Years: Atlanta 2021 45
AVSA 2021 Convention Preview 46

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Index Of Advertisers

Amazon Smile—AVSA ..... Inside Back Cover
American Orchid Society ..... Inside Back Cover
AVS of Canada 62
AVSA Drinkware 47
Bloomlala Apparel 33
Cryptanthus Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 62
Gesneriad Society 63
Glenda's House of Violets 62
Growing to Show—AVSA 63
Hobby Greenhouse ..... Inside Back Cover
Indoor Gardening Supplies 63
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery ..... Inside Back Cover
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 62
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 64
Physan 20 64
Swift Moist-Rite Planter 63
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Peddlers Plus 64
Violet Supply 62

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

To Our AVSA Friends:

Oh, what a year it has been! It seems like only yesterday that I was elected your president at the Houston Convention. We had no idea then of the changes the year would bring. We knew that we had secured a new rental office location and were looking forward to selling our North Street property. We did sell the property, and settled into our rental location with the hope of finding a permanent property to purchase. Little did we know that in September, a tropical storm would dump more than 40 inches of rain on Beaumont, Texas, resulting in up to 12 inches of water in our rental office.

This required yet another quick move to secure our AVSA assets. We secured another rental office, and thanks to the generosity of our members, replaced items lost in the flood. Office Manager Amy Carruth slowly brought our office back to the new normal. Then, what should happen, but the COVID-19 pandemic! Amy has been working from home, taking care of our members' requests. It was with heavy hearts that your AVSA Executive Committee, along with Convention Director Kathy Lahti, made the decision to cancel the 2020 Little Rock Convention. This decision was made with the health and safety of our members in mind. The Little Rock Convention has been rescheduled for 2022.

A Virtual Show

Then, thanks to the "outside-the-box" thinking of First Vice President Susan Anderson, Second Vice President Mary Corondan, and Website Chair Candace Baldwin, we developed the idea for a virtual show. Many others, including Tom Glembocki, were instrumental in planning and executing this outstanding event. I hope you participated in our virtual event. Kudos to all those who "attended" and made this first-ever virtual show happen! And congratulations to the recipients of the show awards. We also extend hearty congratulations to those who received well-deserved Society Awards (page 34). Finally, congratulations to our *AVM* Contest Award recipients (page 57). Keep writing those outstanding articles!

New Directors

Congratulations and welcome to our newly elected directors: Douglas Allen, Dr. Minh Bui, Winston J. Goretsky, Nancy Hayes and Sandra Skalski. Since they could not attend an installation banquet this year, we will include them in the installation of the 2021 Officers and Directors at our 75th AVSA Anniversary Celebration in Atlanta, Georgia.

Your Executive Committee elected Linda Hall to serve as Chair of the 2021 Nominating Committee, along with four members nominated and elected electronically. This very important committee will be soliciting applications for the positions of Secretary, Third Vice President, and Directors. Find the application on the AVSA website if you or someone you know would like to serve in one of these positions. AVSA always needs volunteers with a variety of skill sets. We are a volunteer organization, and as such, we need and appreciate your help and expertise to make AVSA the best it can be.

Find information about AVSA's 75th Anniversary Celebration in Atlanta on page 44. Save the date and make plans to help us return to Atlanta to celebrate AVSA's 75-year history in 2021.

Please contact me or any of your officers if you have suggestions, concerns, ideas or anything on your mind. After all, communication is the key to making AVSA all it can be. Please remember through our continuing two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Editor's Notes

By Teresa Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

Although these are tough times in many ways, they also are exciting times for AVSA members. First, we are kicking off the celebration of the society's 75th Anniversary. Carolee Carter and the Publications Committee are interviewing members and we plan to honor our history, especially the past 25 years, in each issue of *AVM* (see page 44) between now and our 2021 Annual Convention and Show in Atlanta.

Meeting Up

So, we all should have May 30 through June 6, 2021, on our calendars. Let's make up for missing seeing one another with an outstanding turnout at our celebratory Atlanta convention (see early details on page 46). But having to cancel the 2020 Little Rock Convention does not mean members missed out on the full convention experience in a time of social distancing. In fact, hundreds of members and potential members of AVSA visited our 2020 Virtual Convention (africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org/virtual/).

Our first-ever virtual meetup was a huge success that came together with a nearly Herculean effort from an energetic team of volunteers. I had a great time looking through the new plant introductions, show plants and designs, and selfies and comments that visitors from around the world posted. Four excellent workshop presentations appeared on the virtual site, so we can watch them anytime from the comfort of our homes. Read more about the convention and enjoy photos beginning on page 9, and be sure to check out the entire site this summer.

Rollout of Digital Magazine

In the May/June 2020 issue, I mentioned we were preparing to roll out a digital version of *AVM* for members. AVSA's Executive Committee has approved making digital copies of all issues available to every full member and the Board will vote on the pricing of a "green membership" option to kick off in September. I am excited about the opportunity to offer paper-free magazines to those who prefer them while adding value to members' access by giving you all both a print and digital copy of your magazine. Read more details on page 54 and view a digital (PDF) version of this issue now at www.avsa.org/digitalAVM (be sure you are logged into your member account).

Balancing Tradition and Change

It's exciting to take advantage of technology to improve AVSA member benefits, but even more exciting is that we also are celebrating a 75-year tradition of growing, showing and hybridizing African violets. The celebration gives all members — long-standing or new — a chance to honor and learn from the history of the society and of African violets.

Offering a digital version of *AVM* and a digital-only membership option also demonstrates the balance AVSA maintains between tradition and the future. Members who prefer to hold in their hands the attractive print addition of *AVM* still can do so. Those who like to read on screens and save paper now have that option. And those of us who like to carry our magazine around and refer back to an article we read recently get the best of both worlds — a printed copy to hold and enjoy at our leisure, plus a digital copy in which we can search to locate an idea or article we want to check again.

Enjoy and plan now to celebrate 75 years with us in 2021.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Milky Way Trail

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: J. Stahl in 1989
AVSA Honor Roll, 1999
Semiminiature Trailer

My First Violets: Repotting

By Sandra Skalski Mullica Hill, New Jersey

Email: sskalski@comcast.net

If you grow African violets, you've got a few violet chores to handle. That's what I call the to-do list for my violet collection. Proper watering, grooming, and repotting are necessary for a healthy plant collection. These activities can be fun, but they need to be done regularly. Like all "chores," I schedule time to handle them.

Why Repot?

Plant growth and potting mix changes are the main reasons to repot your violets. Young, healthy plants need to move gradually into larger pots to maintain their health and beauty. Sometimes, the pot size is fine, but the plant has grown a neck or "tree trunk" after removal of older leaves during grooming. Fertilizer salts build up in the soil over time. The potting mix also degrades as the peat moss or coir break down, becoming more acidic. Perhaps you have encountered a pest or disease problem and need to remove the infected soil to save the plant. Repotting helps resolve all these issues.

Like any chore, it's a good idea to tackle repotting before it becomes critical. Plants will decline if they haven't been repotted in the past six months to a year. The foliage can yellow, or the centers grow small and tight. These are possible signs that the pH of the potting mix has drifted into an unhealthy range from the potting mix breakdown, making fertilizers unavailable to the plant. Similarly, a young plant left in a smaller pot for too long won't develop even, symmetrical rows of leaves. A long neck on a single crowned plant or a limp, straggly trailer are other signs that a repotting session is sorely needed.

How often to repot your violets is a common concern. Show growers tend to repot often, perhaps three or more times per year. You don't need to be that ambitious, but you should plan to repot once or twice a year. I keep track of when I repotted my plants using spreadsheets. However, your system might be as simple as writing the date on a piece of tape stuck to the pot.

> You should plan to repot your violets once or twice a year.

Preparation Is Key

Your repotting day will be more successful and less stressful if you prepare in advance. Gather your supplies before you start. Consider the plants you want to repot and decide the size of pots you will need. Make sure the pots are clean. I store my potting mix in repurposed cat litter buckets. I scoop out a portion of the mix into a smaller bucket, then dampen it, mixing it thoroughly so it is evenly moist but not sopping wet. I cut lengths of wicks from a skein of black synthetic yarn in case I need a new one.

I like to use a half-inch layer of perlite in the bottom of pots 4.5 inches large or larger to increase the root aeration. I prepare these pots in advance, using a circle of paper towel cut to fit the inside of the pot to prevent the perlite from slipping through.

I line a potting tray with layers of newspaper, and set inside it a bucket of potting mix and soil scoop, grooming tools, clean pots, precut wicks, and a pair of disposable gloves. As I finish with one plant, I roll up the layer and toss it, along with the discarded bits of soil and plant trimmings. I also wash my hands between plants. This all helps to prevent passing any possible pests or diseases from one plant to another.

The tools of the repotting chore all laid out and ready to go.

Types of Repotting

Young, actively growing plants need to be potted up. This means you want to move the plant up to the next larger-size pot. For example, if you have a standard African violet starter plant in a 2.5-inch pot, you should pot up the plant into a 3-inch squatty pot. Once you see the leaves growing and see roots coming out of the bottom of the pot, you can pot that standard up into a 4-inch squatty pot.

Mold potting: A young trailer ready to remove from a 2-inch pot and slip into the mold formed in a 3-inch pot.

For casual growers, a 4- or 4.5-inch pot should be the largest you need. Remember, ideally, the rosette of leaves should be three times the width of the pot. So, this pot size can accommodate a 12- to 14-inch diameter plant, which is plenty big for the casual grower. Some show growers might want to continue potting up to a 5-inch, or even a 6-inch pot. If you want to grow plants that reach 15 to 18 inches, be sure you have growing space. One common beginner mistake is potting a plant into a container that is too large. Don't skip pot sizes. Your plants will spend all their energy growing roots to fill the pot before they will send out new growth or blossoms.

Mold Potting

To move a young plant into the next size pot, you can use a technique called mold potting. You make a mold in the new larger pot by filling with soil around an empty pot the same size as your plant's current home. The photos below show a young standard violet that's ready to move up from a 3-inch pot into a 4-inch pot using the mold potting method. I use a flexible piece of plastic sheet to gently lift the leaves so that I can add soil to fill in any gaps. This "leaf lifter" keeps soil from getting on the leaves and petioles.

Potting up a standard African violet using the mold potting method and a plastic leaf lifter (bottom).

Potting Down

Repotting doesn't necessarily mean moving a plant to a larger pot. Miniature and semiminiature violets should remain in 2- to 2.5-inch pots. You also can keep a standard African violet in the same 4- to 4.5-inch pot. However, as the plants grow and you

groom away older leaves, the plant can develop a long neck. These plants need to be potted down.

Gently remove the plant from the pot. Using a sharp knife, slice off enough of the bottom of the root ball so that it will lower the plant back into the same size pot and the petioles will be even with or just slightly below the pot rim. Remove the top layer of potting mix. Fertilizer salts tend to accumulate there. Gently scrape away the calloused tissue on the neck. Re-seat the plant in a clean pot. Using the leaf lifter, add soil to the top of the pot to just below the lower petioles.

Sometimes after neglecting your repotting chores, you find a plant with a long neck like the one in the photo (below left). Potting down won't work in this case, but you can save a plant like this if you are willing to cut off its head.

Remove the outer leaves and cut the neck, leaving an inch or two. Gently scrape the calloused tissue from the neck. Place the standard plant in a prepared 3- or 4-inch pot. Slip the potted plant into a Ziploc bag. Keep the plant in bright, indirect light for about two weeks. Gently tug on the plant. If you feel resistance, the plant has rooted. If not, leave it for a couple more weeks. Open the bag gradually after the plant has rooted, so that it gets used to the lower humidity.

... you can save a plant like this if you are willing to cut off its head.

That wasn't so hard! Violet chores are a good excuse to spend time with your plants. Admire your freshly potted plants and perhaps snap a photo for comparison later. African violets will reward you with fresh, new foliage and blossoms very soon. But your chores are not complete.

Cleanup also is important so all your supplies are ready to use the next time. Cleaning also helps eliminate any pests or diseases that could contaminate your next batch of plants. Rinse the dirty, used pots and soak them overnight in a 10% solution of bleach. Scrub away stubborn soil or fertilizer salts, rinse and let dry. Bleach your tools, and thoroughly clean and sanitize your potting tray. Make a record of the plants you repotted so that you will know when to repot them again. Happy Growing!

An overgrown neck (left) cut down (center), then repotted and placed in a plastic bag.

2020 Virtual Convention: New Introductions

L to R: K's Fiesta Lady, Hybridizer: Kathy Hajner, Standard; Hodss-Amelie, Hybridizer: Yana Hodss Khodchenko, Standard; NK-Prominchik, Hybridizer: Natallia Kozak, Standard.

L to R: Bye Bye Blues, Hybridizer: Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Standard; Rivermist Salsa, Hybridizer: Joan Baker, Standard; LC's Playmate, Hybridizer: Lynn Canning, Semimini.

L to R: DS-Indigo, Hybridizer: Elen Dimeytris, Streptocarpus; GriN Nina, Hybridizer: Nina Grisha, Mini Sinningia; Cathay's William, Hybridizer: Margery Clive-Anderson, Sinningia.

AVSA Holds Successful Virtual Convention

Leave it to AVSA volunteers to make lemonade from lemons by creating the opportunity to share and learn via a virtual meet-up during the COVID-19 pandemic. When the 74th Annual AVSA Convention and Show had to be cancelled, a tireless group of volunteers stepped in at the last minute to put together a virtual convention. Following the cancellation, Susan Anderson, AVSA First Vice President, remembers thinking to herself, "AVSA needs a virtual show!" She gathered help and served as virtual show chair; Mary Corondan, AVSA Second Vice President, served as Show Co-chair.

According to Susan, "In less than eight weeks, an entirely new website was built, videos recorded, photos collected, a show process defined, and the 'virtual convention experience' was created." This was quite a feat and a popular event for members and potential members around the country and world. Susan thanks Mary for "envisioning a full convention experience, complete with programs and prizes." She adds, "Thank you, Tom Glembocki and Candace Baldwin, for finding just the right tools to build this website and for having the patience to teach the rest of us. And thank you, Joyce Stork, for ensuring a pleasant user experience with every event and leading the marketing and promotion activities."

The virtual convention, hosted online by AVSA at africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org/virtual, was as close to being together as AVSA members could get. Participants came from 35 states (including 68 AVSA Affiliate Chapters), Canada, Russia, Japan, Portugal and more. And the virtual event even included a "Selfie" page where anyone attending from home could post a photo and message. See a few samples on page 19, but be sure to check out the selfie gallery for some fun photos and messages.

African violet lovers attended the 2020 convention on a computer, tablet or mobile phone.

If you missed the virtual event, read on to learn more, then go to the website and enjoy photos of exhibits and new introductions and free access to the presentations through this summer. And be sure let your friends know, since the site's content is open to the public.

New Introductions

Hybridizers from around the world contributed to our 2020 New Introduction Gallery (see photos page 9 and the entire gallery at africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org/virtual/new-introductions/). We received images of 187 new African violets, most of which were from Russian hybridizers, and 63 other gesneriads. You should find plenty of new standards, minis, semiminis and gesneriads you are sure to love.

Workshop Presentations

No worries about finding a seat for favorite workshop or presenter; just pull up a desk chair, sofa or park bench and enjoy a full educational presentation from home. Here is a rundown:

- Spectral Enlightenment: One Light Does Not Fit All — from Dr. Minh Bui

•Success With Gesneriads — Dale Martens
•African Violet Plant Health and Diagnostics: the Good, the Bad, the Ugly (three parts) — Glenda Williams
•African Violets 101: It's Not Just for Beginners — Adrienne "Annie" Rieck

AVSA thanks all these experienced growers who donated their time to develop a presentation, and to even record it in advance to post online. You can view these outstanding educational presentations on the virtual site this summer or on AVSA's YouTube channel all year.

Salesroom

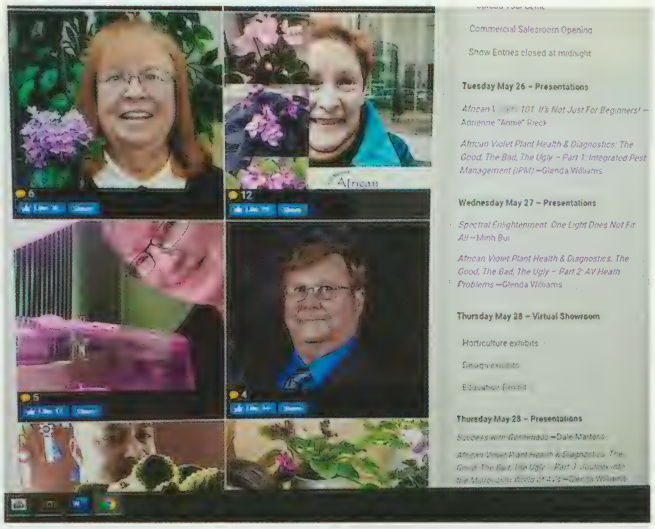
AVSA and all who participated really appreciate the inclusion of a virtual salesroom. The opening of the commercial sales at each national convention is a popular event, to say the least. This year, 12 vendors sold plants and six sold growing supplies. Many of our reliable and experienced Commercial Members included special offers for those shopping during the convention. Visit the virtual salesroom this summer to link directly to one of the following AVSA Commercial Members:

•Christopher Violets, Kansas
•Dave's Violets, Missouri
•Enchanted Gardens, New York
•Glenda's House of Violets, Texas
•Hajner's Hybrids, New Mexico
•JoS Violets, Texas
•Linda's Secret Garden, Florida
•Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, New York
•Moonlight Nursery, Delaware
•Mrs Strep Streps Plant and Supplies, Georgia
•Music City Farms, Tennessee
•Patty's Plants and Antiques, Kansas
•Petals and Leaves, Washington
•Peacock Cottage/Dandy Pots, Florida
•Swift Moist-rite Planters, Oklahoma
•Violet Barn, New York

Horticultural and Design Exhibits

Browsing the show room after judging ends is a thrill at any AVSA national convention. This year, virtual attendees were treated to more than 350 show plants in several classes: standard green, standard variegated, semiminis green, semimini variegated, miniature, trailing, and species plants. The show schedule theme for design included "Virtual Reality" and "Artificial Intelligence." We had some fun and creative design entries, including five plant designs, seven flower designs, and five container gardens.

See a select few of the show entries on pages 12 to 13 and the entire gallery online at https://africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org/virtual/.


Commercial Salesroom Opening
Show Entries closed at midnight
Tuesday May 26 – Presentations
Wednesday May 27 – Presentations
Thursday May 28 – Virtual Showroom
Thursday May 28 – Presentations

Screenshot of virtual convention selfies.

Prizes

We entered the names of all virtual exhibitors who submitted five photo entries into a drawing for a gift certificate from an AVSA Commercial Member. A total of 95 exhibitors entered 5 or more plants, and 45 of them received a gift certificate from one of the generous vendors. Congratulations to all winners and thank you to:

•The Violet Barn, New York
•Moonlight Nurseries, Delaware
•JoS Violets, Texas
•Glenda's House of Violets, Texas
•Christopher Violets, Kansas
•Music City Farms, Tennessee
•Patty's Plants and Antiques, Kansas
•Dave's Violets, Missouri

2020 Virtual Convention: African Violet Exhibits

L to R: Rhapsodie Margit III, Standard. Exhibited by Mark Romansky; Yukako, Standard. Exhibited by Jere Trigg; Jersey Snow Flakes, Standard. Exhibited by Annie Rieck.

L to R: Wild Irish Rose, Standard. Exhibited by Anthony Freedland; PT-Aprel'skii Denek, Standard. Exhibited by James Graf; Mac's Misty Meadow, Semimini. Exhibited by Penny Wichman.

L to R: Lyon's June Bug, Semimini. Exhibited by Marjorie Bullard; Honey Blue Angel, Mini, Exhibited by Linda Heath; Precious Red, Mini. Exhibited by Margery Anderson-Clive.

AVSA Virtual Convention 2020: Exhibits

Enjoy these photos of designs, trailers and species plants exhibited at the 2020 AVSA Virtual Convention. To see all the entries, go to the Virtual Convention Website.

L to R: Flower Design: Artificial Intelligence, Susan Anderson; Flower Design: Artificial Intelligence, Jane Feldman; Dish Garden: Kentucky Valley View, Minh Bui.

L to R: Rolling Pink Cloudburst, Erika Geimonen; Biscayne Trail, Dolores Gibbs; Rob's Willawong, John deSaavedra.

L to R: S. clone *ionanthus*, Ryan Ferre; S. clone *velutinus*, Carol Semrau; S. clone *confusa* Mather E, Candace Baldwin.

Cosmic Variegation

By Vladimir Kalgin Moscow, Russia

For me, the most desirable trait of African violets is their variability. Of course, violets have many more important features: they are happy to share our homes with us, bloom the entire year, and are easy to care for and propagate. But the most important is that violets constantly give us pleasant surprises and gifts, including a new type of variegation.

Every year hybridizers introduce up to hundreds of new varieties with incredible colors and shapes of flowers. However, the best surprise is the gift from nature when a violet decides to change for some reason, without a hybridizer's plan or desire. Any African violet grower experiences such changes when we get sports of plants, usually with flower colors that differ from the original variety. I remember in the past when a lot of Russian growers would throw away violets with such changes. About 15 years ago, Dom Fialki introduced special awards at our shows to encourage growers to keep unusual sports with new traits, especially new chimeras, and to propagate and name them. Since then, we have seen hundreds of new varieties introduced from sports.

The white flowers and cosmic variegation of ShN-Kosmicheskaia Feia (Cosmic Fairy). Photo by Natalia Shushakova.

> The best surprise is the gift from nature ... without a hybridizer's plan or desire.

I had thought that the age of new discovery for African violets had largely passed. In the 1950s to 1960s, American hybridizers discovered and introduced a lot of new traits in African violets. Single and pansy violets were joined by hybrids with double flowers or with star, bell and wasp blossoms. Hybridizers introduced violets with girl leaves. Three main types of variegation — Tommie Lou, crown and mosaic — were discovered.

Types of Variegation

About 15 years ago, at an AVSA convention auction, I purchased back issues of *African Violet Magazine* that had been collected by Frank Tinari and I was impressed that in the 1940s, growers already were propagating variegated violets. In the *AVM* vol. 2, no. 3 (1949) on page 6, there are two black and white photos of variegation in plants such as White Lady and Blue Girl. For me, the White Lady looked like crown variegation and the Blue Girl plant had spontaneous variegation, though the types of variegation were not defined. On the next page, there is an article

about variegation by Phyllis Ferrall that included mention of variegated violet propagation and encouraged growers to share their experience.

Mosaic variegation is the most important for our discussion. I have grown a sport of Frank Tinari's Lilian Jarret for about 15 years that has mosaic variegation. Mosaic variegated varieties still are rare. A search in my First Class version gives 75 varieties with mosaic variegation. About half of them look to be Tommie Lou variegation with diffused edges. When I see a violet with mosaic variegation, I always acquire it for my collection. I grow Genetic Blush, hybridized by Jeff Smith, and Mac's Just Jeff, hybridized by George McDonald.

I grow Tina's April Fantasy with purple fantasy marks on the leaves. Some growers told me that it is known as "elf variegation." But Dr. Jeff Smith told me that we should not consider such marks as true leaf variegation since there are no white or yellow parts of leaves and the chlorophyll is not affected. Also, Jeff mentioned that puff fantasy leaf mutations recently were recognized in the leaves of some plants. Fantasy puffs were in the red underside of the leaves.

The rarest variegated plants are leaf chimeras. Ralph Robinson is so lucky to get leaf chimeras (I counted five of them) in his Rob's Lucky series. A couple of years ago, I acquired a new Rob's Lucky Snowflake at the AVSA Convention from Olive Robinson. I also grow some leaf chimeras introduced by Russian and Ukrainian hybridizers, the most popular of which is Zhemchuzhnaya Vostorg (Pearl Delight) that Russian grower Daria Glushkova has hybridized as a sport of Rob's Boolaroo trailer.

Cosmic Gift

Since the three main types of variegation were discovered over the past 60 years, hundreds of millions of violets have been grown. African violets are so variable and they produce many sports, some of which have been selected and propagated by growers. With so many sports, the chances are high that we could find a new trait for violets. It looks like we have gotten an unbelievable gift from the cosmos.

Every year at the end of September, we have an African violet show devoted to Russian and Ukrainian hybridizers at Dom Fialki in memory of the well-known Russian hybridizer Boris Makuni, who passed away in 2002. When I visited the show, one of the growers, Marina Karpova, came up and showed me a leaf with unusual variegation of yellow spots, or puffs, of different sizes. These puffs looked like clusters of stars and galaxies in a green space.

> As babies grow, they get more puffs and the marks become bigger.

Marina told me that she acquired one such unusual violet just before the show and brought it to get help from more experienced growers. They recommended she discard the plant immediately because they were afraid the spots represented a virus. Fortunately, Marina decided not to follow their advice and tried to get more information about unusual variegation. My opinion was that such cosmic beauty could not be a virus, but that we should seek Dr. Smith's expertise. Marina emailed me a couple of photos that I forwarded to him.

Testing for Variegation

Since September 2019, when I first contacted Dr. Smith to seek his expertise regarding a new type of variegation, we have exchanged more than 20 email messages discussing the issue. He gave me significant details and facts about the history of variegation types and how to test for true variegation vs. virus. Thank you, Jeff, for your advice, which was very important!

We discussed with Dr. Smith how to test to make sure our new variegation was not a virus. I was curious about how American hybridizers had handled this; I know that mosaic-variegated tobacco and tulip plants should be burned immediately to prevent infection of other plants. Frank Tinari tested Lilian Jarrett Variegated to ensure it was variegation, not a virus.

If we were to bring a leaf to a laboratory, what kind of virus would we expect to find? Dr. Smith

A green leaf soaking in variegated leaf solution. Photo by Marina Karpova.

recommended a simple test. The grower should try grinding a variegated leaf to make a solution. Next, he said to soak the freshly cut ends of some solid green leaves from another plant in the solution. If there is a virus in a variegated leaf, it should infect green leaves and some of the green leaves would produce variegated babies. If green leaves still produce green babies, this should not be a virus. The larger the number of green leaves "infected" by the variegated solution, the better the test. I asked Marina about such an experiment.

Cosmic Experiment

Marina started the experiment in early October 2019. She smashed the entire variegated leaf, even though she did not have spare leaves. (It is enough to use only the petiole and to root the leaf to produce babies.) Marina placed the freshly cut ends of green leaves in the solution for one minute and rooted a dozen of them. At the same time, she rooted a couple of variegated leaves.

By the end of February, Marina had the leaves with big babies. All the green leaves "infected" by the variegated leaf solution produced green babies and two variegated leaves produced babies with cosmic variegation. Though the results were promising, Dr. Smith asked us to continue the experiment.

I soaked more than 100 leaves in variegated leaf solution and rooted them to check for infection.

In early March 2020, we had an African violet show at Dom Fialki and I asked Marina to bring a couple of variegated leaves to demonstrate to growers how we tested to check that this was not a virus, but a new variegation. We smashed petioles of two variegated leaves in a plastic container. I soaked freshly cut ends of miniature green leaves in the solution about 20 minutes (we could put more mini leaves than standard leaves in the small container). After that, I took the container home and let the leaves stay in the solution overnight. The next day I rooted them. As Dr. Smith recommended, I added a small amount of water to the solution and soaked the next 20 leaves for a couple of days. I continued to soak groups of leaves, increasing exposure up to one week. It took me a couple of weeks to root more than 100 leaves. Now we had to wait for two or three months.

Solid green leaves produced solid green babies (left) and variegated leaves produced variegated babies (right). Photos by Marina Karpova.

During the demonstration of the experiment at Dom Fialki, Marina mentioned some facts that could confirm this was new variegation and not a virus. Variegated leaves produce variegated babies, though small babies have few small puffs. As babies grow, they get more puffs and the marks become bigger. It might be that small babies need

One of Natalia's leaves showing the cosmic variegation. Photo by Natalia Shushakova.

more chlorophyll to grow and they could not allow variegated areas of the plant without chlorophyll to develop. When a plant matures, it has more leaves and the green surface is large enough to allow more and larger yellow puffs.

Marina mentioned one more significant fact. She tried to force the variegated plant to bloom and placed it closer to the light. The plant not only bloomed, but produced more and bigger yellow puffs on all the leaves. It looks like the plant suffered from too-intense light and tried to develop variegated areas without chlorophyll to compensate for the excessive light.

Cosmic Encounter

Marina Karpova had bought the variegated violet in September 2019 from Natalia Shushakova in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (former Soviet Union republic, about 2000 miles southeast of Moscow). Natalia had acquired the violet in summer 2018. She had grown violets for about five years at that time and had nearly 300 varieties, so she thought she could not be surprised by any new variety. But one day she saw a woman with a dozen violets at a street market.

Natalia's attention was attracted by an unusual violet with yellow puffs on the leaves. She asked the owner if it could be propagated by leaves. The answer was "yes," and Natalia decided to buy the plant for about $4. At home, Natalia noticed that the violet was unnamed and decided to name it ShN-Kosmicheskaia Feia (Cosmic Fairy). I think the name is perfect.

Natalia recognized an unusual variegation in a cosmic or galactic pattern. If you check First Class, you will find a couple of dozen varieties with "cosmic" or "galactic" in their names. Usually these varieties have flowers with fantasy puffs that look like the variegated puffs of Natalia's plant.

The name Cosmic Fairy also is meaningful because it looks like Natalia got the variegated violet from a fairy who visited Bishkek in 2018, gave her the cosmic gift and disappeared as a fairy usually does. Natalia has not seen her during the past two years.

Natalia Shushakova of Bishkek with a Cosmic Fairy.

For a rational reason why the variegated violet emerged in Bishkek, we should consider that Bishkek is a city in the South and one-half mile above sea level with high insolation (sun exposure). We imagine

the variegated mutation was the plant's attempt to avoid excessive sunlight if it was staying in a window. Often, if an African violet does not die because of stressful growing conditions, it tries to adapt with suitable mutation. But Cosmic Fairy is a nice fairytale version of such adaptation.

I should mention that the plant Natalia acquired two years ago is alive and happy. That helps confirm that the plant's features represent new variegation, not a virus that would kill the plant.

The Future

What is the future of this cosmic beauty? First, the entire plant is not as beautiful as a separate leaf. There is no symmetrical leaf pattern. The flower peduncles are weak with few blooms and the flowers are smaller than those on most standard plants.

If the experiment is successful, the cosmic variegated ShN-Kosmicheskaia Feia would be very useful for hybridizers. They could introduce floriferous symmetrical plants with strong peduncles and large blossoms. I would like to see flowers with cosmic fantasy puffs on cosmic variegated leaves.

Plant with new cosmic variegation. Photo by Marina Karpova.

Natalia Shushakova and Marina Karpova tried to pollinate their variegated plants but did not succeed. I hope more experienced hybridizers will have more success. And the variety ShN-Kosmicheskaia Feia should go down in African violet history.

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from October 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020 Total: $558

Geneva— $100-$149

AVC of Southern California
In memory of Barbara Burde and Gini McCanne
Beverly Geary, Corvallis, MT
Michigan State AVS, Ann Arbor

Multicolor — $50-$99

Burbank AVS, CA
In memory of Barbara Burde and Gini McCanne
Jan Houston, Champaign, IL

Two-tone — $25-$49

Kathy Bell, Tucson, AZ

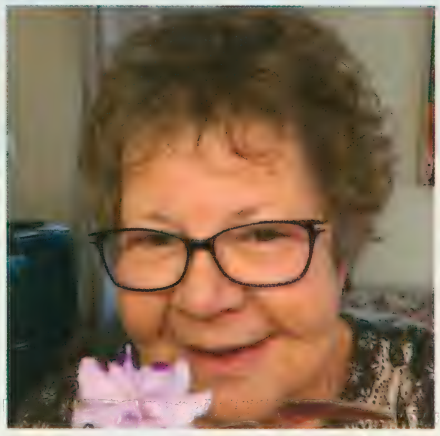
Thumbprint — Under $25

Adrienne Claggett, Nashville, TN
Terri Cota, Fishers, IN
Alice Dulaney, Broomall, PA
Arnold Mueller, Vista, CA
Suzanne Myers, Clarkesville, GA
North Star AV Council, Blaine, MN
Victoria Quintrall, Sacramento, CA
Carol Rosiak, Sullivan, IN
Betty Sigler, West Palm Beach, FL
Joanne Wagner, Richmond, VA
Kathryn Walke, Richardson, TX
Tonya Weisensel, Poynette, WI

Selfies of 2020 Virtual Convention "Attendees"

Virtual convention attendees sent selfies and messages. L to R: Kazuo Horikoshi, Tokyo, Japan; Erin Charles, Flower Mound, TX ; new grower Leslie from Davie, FL.

L to R: Shawn Edwards, Las Vegas, NV; Geneva Stagg, Germantown, TN; (top L to R:) Kathy Bell and Susan Anderson; (lower L to R:) Jeri Anderson, Candace Baldwin, Arizona.



L to R: Anna Pechereeva, Bishkek, Russia; Claire Ulanoff, Nashville, TN; Meredit Hall, Reisel, TX. See the full gallery at africanvioletsocietyofamerica.org/virtual/selfie-gallery.

Coming Events

Summer and fall African violet shows and sales still might be cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus. This list represents those shows still scheduled on our website as of May 26. Be sure to check the AVSA website Events page (www.avsa.com/events), search the local club on Facebook, or contact the organizers below for the latest information.

September 12 — Georgia
African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta
Show and Plant Sale
North Decatur Methodist Church
1523 Church Street
Decatur, GA
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sue Myers: 630-319-3155
avclubofga@gmail.com

September 25-26 — Florida
African Violet Council of Florida
Statewide African Violet Show & Sale
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
439 East Norvell Bryant Hwy.
Hernando, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m. (sales); 12:30-5 p.m. (show)
Saturday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (sale and show)
Elvie Blakely: 321-362-3961
Debbie Wesch: 352-634-1564
www.africanvioletcounciloforida.club

October 3 — Michigan
Michigan State African Violet Society
Display and Sale
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
800 N. Dixboro Rd
Ann Arbor, MI
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Lynn Allen: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

October 3-4 — Minnesota
North Star African Violet Council
Judged Show and Sale
Bachman's Floral Gift and Garden, Heritage Room
6010 Lyndale Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Kealy-Falk: mkealyfalk@aol.com
nsavctc@gmail.com

October 7 — Oregon
Portland African Violet Association
Education/displays/sales
Portland Nursery
9000 SE Division
Portland, OR
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Alice Wagner: 503-631-3925
alicemaeblue@yahoo.com

October 9-10 — Nebraska
Missouri Valley African Violet Council
Fall Show and Sale
Ramada Inn, 72nd and Interstate 80
Omaha, NE
Friday: noon-5 p.m. (sale)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (sale and show)
Randy G. Deutsch: 605-321-0717
rcjsch@prodigy.net
MVAVC.org

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Annabelle

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: K. Stork in 1997
Large Standard

Contest Entry —

Putting an African Violet to "Sleep"

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

Years ago, I was fortunate to spend a day with the legendary Ethel Champion. As I watched her work in her surprisingly small basement growing space, I noticed small sealed plastic bags hanging all around with what looked like African violets inside. When I asked her what they were, she told me that they were indeed African violets, "sleeping" until they were needed.

I was amazed! Ethel would keep these plants in a sort of suspended animation and when she needed a particular set of genes, she would revive the plant, grow it out until it bloomed, harvest the pollen, and then put it back to "sleep" again.

I asked her to show me how it was done and she took more than an hour to explain the entire process. Thank goodness I took notes! It took me a while before I could consistently replicate her results, but I eventually mastered the process.

I recently posted the steps in an online African violet forum to which I belong, and someone asked the intelligent question, "Why would someone want to do this?" I can think of several reasons:

- Space limitations (particularly for hybridizers or overly enthusiastic collectors).
- A desire to "hold" young plants when propagation exceeds opportunity or demand.
- To prepare for a move, particularly over a great distance.
- To prepare for an extended stay away from home, as in a military assignment or extended work project.
- As a way to preserve unusual or vintage varieties that you no longer have the time or interest to grow.

I am sure that there are other good reasons, too. I will rely on all of you to come up with those.

Ethel would keep these plants in a sort of suspended animation ...

How to Put an African Violet to Sleep

Using this method, it is possible to put African violets into a state of suspended animation, which can be maintained for up to two years without harming the plant. Please follow the instructions precisely; they

Gathering all the materials and preparing a workspace (left); the African violet rinsed and dried (center); removing leaves and trimming roots (right). Photos by Mary Ruth Alred Follett.

are the result of years of trial and error and even the smallest variation could lead to either desiccation or vascular collapse.

Step 1: Remove all the leaves except the four or five smallest at the crown. The finished spread must be no greater than one-half inch for minis, 1 inch for semiminis and 1.5 inch for standards.

Step 2: Clean all the medium off of the roots and trim them to no more than one-half inch long.

Step 3: Allow the newly trimmed plant to sit on a clean sterile surface (I use fresh newspaper) until all trim points — leaf joints and roots — "scab over."

Step 4: Moisten (do **not** drench) the roots and the bottom one-fourth of the stem and dip it (actually, sort of lay it gently across) sterile fine vermiculite. You should end up with just a light covering on the roots. If the plant senses there is medium into which it can grow, it will enter a growth cycle, but if there is no medium at all, the roots will dry out and the plant will die.

Step 5: Open an appropriately sized ziplock bag (sandwich size for minis and semiminis; quart size for standards) and, holding onto the diagonal so that it makes a diamond shape, put no more than four or five drops of distilled water into the bottom point of the bag, taking care not to get water on the sides of the bag (I use an eyedropper).

Step 6: Lower the plant into the bottom until it just touches the bottom. Do not force it down into the corner!

Step 7: Seal the ziplock bag, leaving only about one-half inch open along the seal.

Step 8: Using a soda straw, blow with your mouth into the ziplock bag until it is about halfway inflated (not fully, like a balloon). This adds just enough air to keep the sides of the bag from touching the plant.

Step 9: As you remove the straw, seal the ziplock bag immediately to trap your breath inside.

Step 10: Keeping the bag in the same orientation (roots at the bottom, diamond-shaped), place the ziplock bag in moderate temperature and low light (about one-fourth to one-third of the amount of light the plant would need to grow.) I sometimes tape my ziplock bags to the poles of my light stand or to the actual light fixtures, or even pin them (obviously, through the part above the seal on the baggie) to the wall a few feet away.

Additional Tips

Check on the plants once a month and add one drop of water only if they appear to be too dry. If there is any condensation on the baggie at all, they are in too much light and are too moist. If you have done it right, the plant will exhibit no new growth but also will not wither.

Depending on the vigor of the African violet at the start of the process, it is possible to keep them in this state for up to two years without injury. "Teenaged" plants (five to six months old) work best. When you take them out of their sleep, just pot them up like you would a regular plant and seal them in a dome or a bag for a few days to a week to allow the plant to adjust.

One last bit of advice: I would recommend setting down a leaf or two of any parent plant you put to sleep as a precaution until you have mastered this, especially if the variety is rare or vintage. Happy growing, folks!

Lightly coating the roots with fine vermiculite (left); placing the roots into the bag with water (center); sealing the bag (right). Photos by Mary Ruth Alred Follett.

Family Portrait: *Sinningia* 'California Sunset'

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, Ohio
Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Sinningia 'California Sunset' is one of my favorite gesneriads. It is not really miniature in size, since the leaves can grow to about 2 inches long. Maybe "compact" would be a better descriptive term. This *Sinningia* doesn't require much room on your light stand so you can grow more varieties. The plant in the photo is only about 5 inches across.

S. 'California Sunset' was one of Dale Martens' first hybrids, from the early 1990s when she lived in California. The mother plant was *S.* 'High Voltage', a miniature with orange flowers, and the father plant was *S.* 'Piglet' (Barbara Roberts) that also had 'High Voltage' as its parent.

Dale says, "I entered it at the 1995 AVSA convention in St. Louis where it got a Best in Class ribbon and no one knew it was growing in hydroponic pebbles." *S.* 'California Sunset' has dark green, oval-shaped leaves and attractive salmon-orange flowers with stripes in the throat.

My *Sinningia* 'California Sunset'.

Sinningias require quite a bit of light to avoid becoming leggy — say under T8 or T5 lights placed several inches above the plant. This is more light than the typical African violet requires. *Sinningias* form tubers and prefer a well-draining potting medium; otherwise the tubers might rot if kept too wet. I place a layer of large-sized perlite chunks (about the size of a nickel) in the bottom of each pot to ensure proper drainage.

Sinningias require quite a bit of light to avoid becoming leggy ...

Propagation of *S.* 'California Sunset' is easy by taking crown cuttings. I insert an inch of the crown's stem into a Solo cup filled with my rooting mix — equal parts Pro-Mix, perlite and vermiculite. I first dip the cut end into Clonex Rooting Gel to help the cut end root and form a tuber. I then place each individual cutting into its own plastic bag while rooting or put multiple cuttings under a dome. Four months later, I should have a well-rooted plant that needs to be repotted into the next size pot so that the new tuber can continue to grow larger.

I highly recommend *Sinningia* 'California Sunset' to you to grow. You will be glad that you did.

AVSA Booster Fund

By Dianna Walston Kokomo, Indiana

Donations received in January and February 2020 Total: $850

Geneva — $100-$499
John Sonderman, Jasper, IN
Tampa AVS, Brandon, FL
In memory of Richard Nicholas
Lynda Vaillancourt, Montrose, CO

Multicolor — $50-$99
Pat Hancock, Middletown, OH
In memory of Bill Foster and Richard Nicholas

Two-tone — $25-$49
Eleanor Mattaliano, Easley, SC
San Diego County AVS, Margaret Siirila, Vista, CA
Town & Country Garden Club, Lake Frederick, VA
In lieu of speaker's fee for Richard Follett
Kathryn Walke, Richardson, TX

Thumbprint — Under $25
Diana Chamberlain, Ithaca, NY
Elizabeth A. Fenske, Saint Paul, MN
Patricia Hale, Owensboro, KY
Robert Kurzynski, Clifton, NJ
Elena Martinez, Miami, FL
Lin Miller, Tijeras, NM
Megan St. George, Royal Oak, MI
Levin Tilghman, Philadelphia, PA
Charlotte Wolfe, Ann Arbor, MI

Interested in Serving on the AVSA Board?

AVSA Members may apply to be considered for nomination to the position of Director. Director duties include:

- Attending the annual AVSA conventions during their term in office.
- Completing an annual report to the Board of Directors.
- Accepting duties as assigned, including but not limited to, serving on committees, overseeing a region of affiliates, helping at annual conventions, etc.

Those who have served at least two years as an AVSA Director can apply to serve in one of the officer positions. Leading up to 2021, AVSA will be seeking candidates for 3rd Vice President and Secretary, as well as Directors.

Download an Application Form from the AVSA website.

Wish to Suggest a Candidate for Director or Officer?

Please contact Linda Hall, Nominating Committee Chairman, at nominating@avsa.org to suggest an individual who should be considered for nomination as a director or officer. The Chair will contact the potential nominee to request an application form. Please include the individual's phone and/or email contact information.

The Work and Journey of Hybridizer Wesley Carter

By Bill Chaney La Pine, Oregon

Hybridizers are driven by the need to create. Some approach their work like an artist, some like a scientist, and some like a dreamer. They are a diverse group of individuals, but all share a love of creating new plants that they can only hope others will appreciate. Wesley Carter is a hybridizer of many unique violets that growers around the world enjoy. He also is an artist who is known for his acrylic-on-wood paintings. In addition, Wesley has had to face challenges that have changed his world. This is a story about his African violets and how the violet community has worked to save his creations and even Wesley himself.

Wesley in 2016. Photo by Kristie Moore.

Like so many of us, Wesley first noticed African violets his grandmother and others were growing as a child; he was about 12 years old. He was curious about these plants and how to propagate them. Wesley's grandmother grew her single purple violet in a terra-cotta pot under a regular incandescent light and always kept an iron nail in the soil. Wesley's step-father was a truck driver, and he met a lady at a truck stop who had a beautiful huge African violet in the foyer, which looked so different from those he had seen before. He convinced her to give him a leaf from which he propagated more plants.

> Wesley's life changed dramatically on that day.

When Wesley was about 22 or 23 years old, he started collecting some of the rarer African violet varieties that were available in a local nursery. He built shelves with fluorescent lights and his collection grew. He ordered plants from various growers and leaves from Germany. Wesley began to spend hours reading everything he could find on African violets and talking to other hybridizers and collectors. He then began to experiment with making crosses from among the extensive collection of plants that he had amassed.

Wesley's Fairy Lights. Photo by Kristie Moore.

Hybridizing Goals

Wesley began to develop a goal for his hybridizing work. He looked for what he felt was an ideal plant, something that he could strive for by using plants with traits that he wanted to include. Wesley has a unique knack for being able to look at two plants and put their genetics together in his head.

Wesley's Forest Dancer. Photo by Kristie Moore.

Wesley's primary goal was breeding wasps. He is drawn to miniatures and unusual bloom and foliage types. Many hybridizers look at a new variety and immediately think about how they would improve it and with what variety they would cross the plant. Wesley was particularly taken with Senk's Vespa Verde but wanted the plant in a miniature. His first crosses that produced significant advancements toward his goal involved Senk's Vespa Verde and a sport of Morgan's Declan Duff. Wesley was a productive and talented hybridizer and his varieties quickly found an audience with violet collectors and exhibitors.

Life Changes

So, Wesley the artist had become a successful and prolific hybridizer of African violets. Then on November 27, 2018, Wesley Carter had a stroke. Wesley's life changed dramatically on that day. He found himself with no place to live, no way to make a living and with more than 750 violets, mostly varieties of his own breeding.

After Wesley's stroke, the African violet community and his friends rallied to his aid, and he downsized his life, bought an old RV he could live in, and gave away most of his plants to trusted friends. This included seedlings that had yet to bloom and his best varieties.

Wesley says that unfortunately, nearly all that information that used to be in his head was gone after his stroke. He once had remembered all the details of his plants such as where they came from and who had hybridized them. He had no idea that one day all that information would go missing from his head. He hadn't written anything down because it was so easy for him to recall all those important details. In Wesley's words, "When I had my stroke, it felt like I aged 20 years in one night."

The Power of Friends

Never underestimate the power of African violets and the people who love them. Wesley's varieties and Wesley the man had great friends in our plant community. The worldwide community of African violet lovers is amazing. When someone gets their hands on a variety they find important and novel, growers will propagate the plant and pass it around with shocking speed. Wesley's varieties are being grown around the world, and often show up in eBay auctions and show exhibits.

Wesley's Pixie Dust. Photo by Kristie Moore.

A few amazing people have gone above and beyond in keeping Wesley's varieties available. Two women from Wesley's local club in Portland, Oregon (Portland AVS), Kristie Moore and Penny Eggleston, have extensive collections of Wesley's varieties. Both growers are active on Facebook. Friends from much further away also have chipped in to help. Beth McConnell Baker of Tennessee has been compiling a list of Wesley's varieties with photos and writing descriptions for them.

Collectors like Tatyana Pospelko of the Ukraine and Nadya Violet of Germany often list Wesley's violets among their offerings. There are many others and a search of eBay, Facebook or the web will turn up many collectors and exhibitors who are growing Wesley's varieties. Wesley has named more than 100 varieties, and although it is unlikely that all of them still exist, more are showing up all the time, lovingly grown by someone who found and fell in love with them.

The Power of Connection

Wesley started the Facebook group African Violet Addicts. It is a popular place with more than 4,500 members. If you haven't checked it out, please do. You will find Wesley there and elsewhere on Facebook, connecting with friends and growers of his varieties. When I asked Wesley if he had any advice for new (or experienced) hybridizers, he offered this: "My best advice is to do it for fun. Just hybridize what you like. Don't worry about other people; just do it because you are enjoying it."

While writing this article, I was struck by the power that one person's passion can have on others all around the world. Regardless of your opinion of the Internet, its ability to allow people with similar interests to find each other is amazing. African violets have the power to inspire us, bring us together and encourage us to help each other.

I was struck by the power that one person's passion can have on others ...

When I asked Wesley what he felt his greatest accomplishment had been so far, he said "Connecting with people has been my greatest achievement — meeting so many wonderful violet people, sharing stories and giving advice." Thank you, Wesley, for your vision, your inspiring work, for all the help you have given so many people, and for the many unique varieties you've created that so many of us love.

Wesley's Windblown Ragamuffin. Photo by Kristie Moore.

Photo Credit: Kristie Moore

Wesley's Dreamy Lucille

Grown by: Kristie Moore
Hybridized by: Wesley Carter

Photo Credit: Kristie Moore

Wesley's Samwise Salutations

Grown by: Kristie Moore
Hybridized by: Wesley Carter

Contest Entry —

Air Movement: An Important Factor for Growing African Violets

By Ray Burnside Riverton, New Jersey

Like so many others, I grow my African violets in the basement. In my efforts to create a perfect environment for them, I set up shelving with LED light fixtures. I also thought it would be a good idea to wrap those shelves with plastic to contain the heat and humidity. At first, this worked rather well. Basements can be a bit on the cool side. Enclosing the shelves provided a warm, moist atmosphere that the plants loved. Leaves grew large and lush. Flowers were abundant.

Leaf Problems

But there was a problem. I noticed that the older leaves developed brown mushy spots, mostly along the edges. Newer, inner leaves seemed fine, but those outer rows clearly were not doing well. Overnight, a beautifully symmetrical plant would develop empty spaces and marred leaves. It wasn't hard to figure out that the same tropical environment that was causing such lush growth also was encouraging either a fungus or bacteria to thrive along with the plants.

Now-open shelves with plastic remaining only on the empty bottom shelf.

I noticed that the older leaves developed brown mushy spots, mostly along the edges.

The plants were growing fast and large but at the expense of strength and health. As a leaf got older it succumbed to the conditions and rotted. Then, to add insult to injury, the plants also developed powdery mildew. I noticed that several other growers were posting photos of similar leaf problems on Facebook African violet group pages. There can be more than one reason for mushy brown spots, but most are related to the same issue — excess moisture.

And a Solution

The solution, I learned, was that African Violets like a temperature around 72 degrees and humidity of about 40% to 50%. But just as important as these two factors, African violets need airflow. I stopped covering the front of the shelves and added a small fan that sits on the floor and runs continuously on a low speed. It is angled at 60 degrees to keep the air gently moving around the room. The fan does not blow like the wind. Rather, it gently keeps the air moving. The fan uses 35 watts of power; running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it is costing me $4.05 per month.

My plants might not be as large as they were with their tropical setup, but they still are a good size. More importantly, there are no mushy spots on the

leaves. The plants are healthy, symmetrical, and beautiful to enjoy. Now, when I remove a leaf, it is for proper grooming. I am no longer creating gaps because I had to remove a leaf long before I should have removed it.

Holding a healthy Buckeye Exotic Dancer.

The plants are healthy, symmetrical, and beautiful to enjoy.

When we consider the original environment of the African violet, this all makes sense. In Tanzania, the plants grow on hillsides in rocky soil. They are rained on frequently and the humidity often is high. But there is plenty of air moving around the plants. So, when they get wet, they dry quickly. I have found that even in a warm, damp basement, the artificial breeze I've added is just as important as the LED lights and the warmth from the furnace.

Not everyone's growing area is the same, and there are other possible solutions for growers. However, if you are finding those brown mushy spots on your plants, consider a small fan. Adding air movement to the right lighting, temperature, moisture and soil mix could be the key to producing that next show plant.

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received in March and April 2020 Total $295

Multicolor — $50-$99
Adrienne Clagget
Noel Montgomery

Two-tone — $25-$49
Phillis Hinkle
Sue Ramser
In memory of Anne Nicholas' mother
James Spittel

Thumbprint — Under $25
Karyn Cichocki
In memory of Nancy Carr
Florence Collins
Barbara Kirby
Robert McMeel
Arnold Mueller
Suzanne Myers
Judith A. Neumann
North Star African Violet Council
Martin Wright

Contest Entry —

Club Meetings in 2020: To Meet or not to Meet?

By William Patterson Copper State African Violet Club, Arizona

The Copper State African Violet Club (CSAVC) of Arizona last met in person on February 15, 2020. The meeting was about the final preparations for our second annual show and sale, scheduled for March 21, 2020. The show was cancelled as the State of Arizona and most of the country were shut down with stay-at-home orders related to the COVID-19 virus that extended at least through April 30. You are reading this article well past the date on which I'm writing it, and some things might have changed since then. However, this article is not about details of virus precautions; this is about how the CSAVC adjusted and met during the pandemic in 2020.

A club member who is a professor at Arizona State University (ASU) uses Zoom meetings with her students. She offered to have a session with the CSAVC Board of Directors to show them how easy it would be to still have a meeting via Zoom.

Preparing for the Meeting

One week prior to the meeting, our club member who teaches at ASU conducted a Zoom training session with the four board members. She showed us how to cohost a meeting, turn the microphone and camera on and off, how to use the chat function, and how to share documents. That sounds overwhelming but it was easy. None of our board members had ever used Zoom before this session. Everyone in the session had the opportunity to take the role of host and control the meeting. This training session lasted about 90 minutes.

Later that afternoon, I created an invitation to have a Zoom meeting and invited the other three board members. Within 30 minutes, we had developed an agenda and plan for the training of our club members on how to join a Zoom meeting. We were now off and running, and within a week, we scheduled a Zoom meeting for the entire club to be held April 18, 2020, from 10 a.m. to noon.

The Zoom screen shows the entire group for virtual interaction. Photo by Susan Anderson.

In preparation for our meeting, I sent an email to all our club members that same evening after our training and board planning sessions:

Hello Violet Friends,
In order to make the meeting successful we will need to have you prepare a little prior to the meeting. If you have never used Zoom before, don't be frightened, it is very easy!

The following link will help to explain how to be a participant. There are additional YouTube videos explaining many other options in much more detail if you choose to explore what Zoom can do. But all you really will need to know to come to the meeting is, "how to join a meeting."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIkCmbvAHQQ

Prior to Saturday I will host a couple get acquainted to Zoom meetings so you can try joining the meeting and become familiar with the camera,

mute and unmute function and the chat. That is all you will need to know to then sit back, relax and interface with the members of the violet club. This is when even prior to the tutorial meeting you can test the log-in/join a meeting once you get the invite to see how simple it is. Then once the tutorial meeting begins I can assist with the simple functions you will use on the 18th for the club meeting.

Please respond to this email with:
1. I'm experienced and Zoom will not be a problem for me.
2. I'm excited we are going to meet and I'm eager to learn the Zoom process.

We offered two experimental "Join a Meeting" dates and times, one daytime option and an evening option. Members who had never used Zoom before attended both sessions and learned how to use their microphone and camera, the chat option, and how to mute.

The Actual Meeting

Now we were all set for the real meeting. The April 18, 2020, meeting had 15 members attend through Zoom. This was an educational meeting presented by Candace Baldwin on various soil recipes, the components of soil amendments and their different proportions. We even received a recipe on pasteurizing soil in an oven-roasting pan, presented by Susan Anderson.

Education made up the first 90 minutes of the meeting, followed by "Show and Tell or Brag and Cry," showing some of the club members' plants. Discussions followed on how to doctor a plant or "oohs and ahs." This led to a brief discussion on fertilizers (another future meeting topic). The meeting ended a little after noon and all who participated were happy that we still were able to have our April meeting. They also were surprised at how easy it was to use Zoom and still have an educational meeting.

... all who participated were happy that we still were able to have our April meeting.

A screenshot of me showing one of my plants. Photo by Susan Anderson.

The moral of this article is: "Don't be afraid to try and use technology."

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Beautiful clothing items featuring African violets from Bloomlala!
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bloomlala.com/collections/violet

Honoring Our 2020 Outstanding AVSA Members

By Linda Hall Email: linda.hall6641@hotmail.com

Thank you to all members who submitted nominees for the 2020 AVSA Society Awards. This year, we are honoring our nominees in *African Violet Magazine* and during the AVSA Virtual Convention. Congratulations to our worthy recipients!

Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership

Recipient: Candace Baldwin

AVSA is proud to present the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership to Candace Baldwin for her dedication, hard work, friendship and leadership to the Copper State African Violet Club (CSAVC). She and Susan Anderson established the club in 2016, making Candace a charter member.

After serving as club vice-president for two years, she currently serves as president. The club has grown to 24 active members with a goal of teaching the joys of growing African violets and sharing the tricks of growing them in a desert environment.

CSAVC held fall sales for three successful years with a goal of educating the public on growing African violets. In fall 2019, the club held its first AVSA show and sale. Candace provided detailed instructions of chair duties so all members would feel comfortable in their jobs.

Candace also is a member of the Tucson African Violet Society. She continually gives programs on all aspects of violet growing for novices and experts in both clubs, plus for the Desert Sun African Violet Society. She makes everyone feel comfortable at all levels of knowledge and growing expertise. Candace also is an AVSA Advanced Judge.

Continuing Service Award

Recipient: Mary Corondan

AVSA is pleased to present the Continuing Service Award to Mary Corondan for her years of dedication, past and present, to AVSA. This award is being given to her for all the hats she wears at the same time. Mary currently is AVSA 2nd Vice-President, Shows and Judges Chair, and temporary Secretary. She also chairs the Policies and Procedures Committee and serves as a member of the Convention Show Awards Committee and Marketing Committee. Mary also has served as a director twice and has been a member of the Building Committee. You also might recognize Mary as the columnist who compiles and writes the "And the Winners Are…" column in *AVM*.

Locally, Mary is a member of, and has served in numerous offices for, Lone Star African Violet Council, First Nighter African Violet Society of Dallas and North Texas African Violet Judges Council. She also is an AVSA Master Judge. Mary is a choir director and singer.

Recipient: Kathy Lahti

AVSA is pleased to present a Continuing Service Award to Kathy Lahti for her many years of dedication as AVSA Convention Director. Since 2006, she has managed to find us affordable convention space in accommodating hotels. Kathy bargains for price controls on meals, tours and parking spots. We have seen this firsthand and Kathy is amazing! But this is not a one- or two-day job. Conventions take years just for the planning stages and she juggles multiple

conventions at the same time. Kathy is calm under pressure and very diplomatic.

Locally, Kathy is a member of the African Violet Society of Minnesota, AVSA Judges Council of Minnesota, Lakes Area Violet Growers and The Gesneriad Society-Twin Cities Chapter. She is a teacher and has been an AVSA Master Judge since 2008. Kathy also is an excellent grower of African violets and has won numerous (too many to list) top awards at the shows she enters, including AVSA national shows.

Recipient: Dr. Bill Price

AVSA honors Dr. Bill Price with a Continuing Service Award for his many years serving as the society's auctioneer extraordinaire. Besides auctioneering, Bill is one of the most generous people we know, always donating plant material to the silent and live auctions. And if you are in the showroom at teardown time, he will gladly give you a cutting or leaf of any plants he has brought to exhibit, which usually have won top awards. He has won many Best In Show ribbons.

Bill is a member of Stampede City African Violet Society, The Vancouver African Violet and Gesneriad Society, Toronto African Violet and Gesneriad Society, Lakeshore African Violet Society of Toronto, New York State African Violet Society, First Nighter African Violet Society of Dallas, Lone Star African Violet Council, The African Violet Society of Canada, The Gesneriad Society, The Gesneriad Society of Sweden, Gesneriasts of Sweden, and the American Orchid Society. And even though Bill is from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, he was made an honorary Texan in 2011.

Bill is an AVSA Senior Judge and teacher. He also is a master gesneriad judge and teacher. Bill travels all over the United States and Canada, judging and giving programs at his own expense.

When Dr. Price retired from his psychiatric practice specializing in autistic disorders, he was honored by hybridizer Brad Jalbert of Select Roses with a rose named " Dr. Bill Price." This was to thank him for the countless people he helped and to whom he brought peace of mind during his career.

From his accomplishments and memberships, you can see that Bill is always promoting and sharing African violets.

Meritorious Service Award

Recipient: Amy Carruth

AVSA is pleased to present a Meritorious Service Award to AVSA Office Manager Amy Carruth. This award is being given to Amy for her years of dedication to AVSA. If you know Amy, you know that she lives, eats and breathes AVSA! She is a most dedicated employee.

This past year, Amy has had to move the AVSA office when the building was sold, and a second time when the new office was flooded. The second move was extremely difficult, as many of the magazines' past issues and other items were waterlogged and had to be thrown out, a backbreaking job. She also has had to deal with flood-related loss of some computers and their stored information, which had to be regenerated. Now, let's add the COVID-19 virus and having to work at home into the mix. Amy has had a "challenging" year to say the least, but through her tears, she smiles.

Recipient: Terri Post

AVSA is pleased to award a Meritorious Service Award to Terri Post for her many years working with AVSA's finances. She currently serves as the Society's Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair. Being a CPA, Terri has donated her accounting expertise with nonprofit organizations to AVSA for many years. She prepared and filed the Society's tax returns from 2009 through this year. She also assisted the previous treasurer in navigating the financial statements and bank records. Terri was also able to set up AVSA's various funds in conservative financial markets to maximize gains and financial stability. This took a lot of time to accomplish but has proved very successful.

Locally, Terri belongs to Missouri Valley African Violet Council and Lone Star African Violet Council. She also

served as Convention Show Vice-Chair in 2015 for the Kansas City Convention.

AVSA thanks Terri for her dedication to promoting and perpetuating the Society and is pleased to present her with a Meritorious Service Award.

Recipient: Glenda Williams

AVSA is pleased to present the Meritorious Service Award to Glenda Williams. This award is given to honor her for two reasons. First, Glenda served as Convention Show Co-Chair in 2019 for the Houston Convention. The time and effort she and her co-chair expended to create and produce a high-quality show was obvious the moment we walked into the show room. They excited all of us with their show and design themes.

Secondly, AVSA wants to acknowledge all the time and hard work she and her husband, Jim, devoted to cleaning and moving the AVSA office to a new location after the flood compromised the former, moldy office. This was no simple task and they stepped up and "offered" their help. They spent more than a week in Beaumont helping Amy. Glenda cleaned, scrubbed and moved "everything" while Jim worked on the computers.

Locally, Glenda is a member of First Austin African Violet Society, Lone Star African Violet Council and Central Texas Judge's Council. She served as an AVSA Director from 2015 to 2017 and as Convention Vice-Chair in 2013 for the Austin Convention.

Honorary One-Year Membership

Recipient: Robert McMeel

AVSA is proud to present an Honorary One-Year Membership to Robert McMeel for serving as Convention Show Co-Chair in 2019 for the Houston Convention. The time and effort he and his co-chairs expended to create and produce a high-quality show was obvious the moment you walked into the show room. They excited all of us with their show and design themes.

Locally, Robbie is a member of the Sundowner's African Violet Society and Dixie African Violet Society. He also is a member of the Gesneriad Society.

Recipient: Anne Nicholas

AVSA is proud to present an Honorary One-Year Membership to Anne Nicholas for serving as Convention Co-Chair in 2019 for the Houston Convention. She and her co-chair put a great deal of time and effort into creating an outstanding convention that was well attended and enjoyed.

Locally, Anne is a member of First African Violet Society of Denton and Lone Star African Violet Council. She is a long-time member of AVSA and served as chair of the Library Committee for 18 years. Anne has also achieved becoming an AVSA Master Judge.

Recipient: Penny Smith-Kerker

AVSA is proud to present an Honorary One-Year Membership to Penny Smith-Kerker for serving as Convention Co-Chair in 2019 for the Houston Convention. She and her co-chair put a great deal of time and effort into creating an outstanding convention that was well attended and enjoyed.

Locally, Penny has been a member of First Austin African Violet Society since 1998, which is also when she became a member of AVSA. She is a member of Central Texas Judges Council and Lone Star African Violet Council. Penny also served as a director from 2015 through 2018. She was the AVSA Convention Chair for the 2013 Austin Convention.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

***Streptocarpus* 'MK-Markiza'**

Exhibited by: Sherrie Zimmerman

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Indiana Academy, Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

It's interesting at times to see how questions I receive cluster around a theme or topic. I don't ask for this to happen; sometimes questions just come in waves from unrelated people. For this column, several questions arrived within days of each other on hybridizing trailers. I've hybridized and released several trailing African violets, but my impression is that trailing is not a simple genetic trait. After all, there are several different types of trailers, including bush type, those with intermediate length stems, and those capable of producing really long dangling stems. Trailers are classified by the leaf size, not the size of the plant, and leaf size is an entirely different genetic issue than is the type of trailing stem. If hybridizers have more and better data on working with trailers they are willing to share, I'd love to expand on the advice I can give here.

Q: My goal is to get a trailer with green flowers. I crossed a green/white flowered non-trailer with a trailer, using two different sets of parents. I got hardly any trailers in the offspring. Is trailing a recessive trait?

A: If you are working with cultivated plants, I suggest treating trailing as a recessive trait. An exception might be if the trailing plant is one that produces especially long, dangling stems. With those trailers as a parent, you sometimes can get bush-style trailers in the F1 offspring.

If the F1 offspring have other desirable traits such as flower color or flower shape, you might try back-crossing them to the trailing parent. That should reinforce the trailing habit and produce better trailers in the next generation.

Q: Why did you specifically mention cultivated plants in the last question? Does working with the species make a difference?

A: My own experience in hybridizing trailers comes from working with the species, not the cultivars. I've worked with the Mather No. 21 clone and have had consistent results of trailers in the F1 generation. The Mather No. 21 clone is one of the species that produces really long dangling stems. I've seen them reach more than 24 inches in length. The F1 offspring are more intermediate in trailing habit, but still produce good trailing stems. The biggest challenge in working with the species is getting around their blue flowers. All of the F1 plants will be trailers, but the blue flower color will dominate all other colors.

Several hybridizers have shared with me that they do not get trailer offspring when using a cultivar trailer as a parent. Based on that information and my own experience with the species, it appears to make a difference on how trailing habit is inherited.

Q: My goal is to produce a trailer with red fantasy thumbprint flowers. What should I look for in choosing parents?

A: One parent should have the red fantasy thumbprint flowers. Both fantasy and thumbprint are dominant genetic traits and will show in a high percentage in the F1 offspring. This plant can be a nontrailer. The second parent should be a trailer with long stems and pink flowers. Pink is a recessive color to red so you should conserve the red flowers if you start with a red fantasy thumbprint. The longer the stems of the trailer, the more likely you might get some sort of trailing, probably bush-type trailing, in the F1. If the F1 plants don't trail, try taking an F1 plant with red fantasy thumbprints and back-crossing to the trailing parent. This back-cross should conserve the flower color while reinforcing the trailing habit. Another option would be to self-pollinate an F1 plant or cross two F1 plants together. This should produce some trailers in the F2, but the percentage will be lower.

Q: Any tips on adding green flowers to trailers?
A: The best (and only?) green flowers available to work with are on non-trailing plants. It is challenging to breed for green flower color because the flower parts become leaf-like and the flowers often are sterile. Yes, they might appear to produce lots of seed pods on their own, but the fruits generally are devoid of seeds.

I'd suggest using the green flowered plant as the pollen parent (better chance of fertility in the pollen) and a strong trailing plant as the seed parent. If possible, use a trailer with pink flowers. The darker colors are more likely to dominate green color in the F1 offspring. I would expect that you'll get a mixture of flower colors in the F1 and probably few, if any, trailers. If you are lucky and get trailers, try crossing them together for the F2 generation. This should reinforce both trailing and the possibility of green flowers. Use F1 plants that have any hints of green coloration in the flowers. With luck, the bits of green coloration on the petal edges can be reinforced to a more solid green in the F2 generation.

It will likely take the F2 generation to achieve your goal of a trailer with green flowers because both the growth form and the color will have to be reinforced in the F2 generation. I'd suggest sowing lots of F2 seed since the probability of your goal plant will be very low. Good luck with this project.

Q: Is it possible to combine different types of fantasy mutations into the same plant?
A: I rarely name specific hybridizers or plants, but I will make an exception here because this question was answered and documented so well recently on Facebook. Hybridizer Joan Barnick Baker has produced several plants, one of which is Rivermist Zombie (see photo), which has both puff and dot/dash fantasy in the same bloom. The flowers are blue-purple stars with white puff fantasy dots. However, there also are dark pink streaks of the dot/dash fantasy in the flower. You can clearly see all these colors and fantasy markings in the picture. The plant actually is a triple fantasy because the red backing on the leaves shows puff fantasy markings as can be seen in the foliage picture. Joan has shown evidence that the puff fantasy and dot/dash fantasy traits separate and inherit independently in other siblings. This suggests that the two fantasy types do not appear to be linked together and can inherit separately. Joan has several additional siblings from the same cross that show the double fantasy flower trait.

Joan Baker's Rivermist Zombie hybrid with double fantasy (top) and puff fantasy on the back of the foliage. Photos by Joan Barnick Baker.

If Rivermist Zombie is an example, it should be possible to easily combine two types of fantasy in the same flower. Fantasy of any type usually inherits as a dominant trait. All that is necessary is to use a puff fantasy as one parent and a dot/dash fantasy as the other. I think it always has been possible to produce combined fantasy plants, but hybridizers might have hesitated to combine two together.

Another interesting possibility would be to use a dot/dash thumbprint fantasy as one parent and cross to a plant with puff fantasy. The puffs likely will make the thumbprint pattern have uneven or fuzzy borders, but all three traits are dominant, so it should be easy to combine them in one generation.

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: winners@avsa.org

■ Central Florida AVS, Inc., FL — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Suncoast Lavender Silk, Nancy Reagan, Jere's Roll Tide; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Joy, Optimara Rose Quartz, Mac's Coral Carillion; Best Standard: Suncoast Lavender Silk; Best Species: S. clone *rupicolus* Cha Simba; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Elvie Blakely.**
- Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Eternal Orbit, Snuggles Little Dreamer; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Miniature: Blue Blaze, **Tammy Cambre.**
- Best Trailer: Baby Brian, **Dale Parker.**
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'BRG 98-083', **Diane Martens.**

■ Spring Branch AVC, TX — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Freckleface Kid, Cajun's Blueberry Hill, Picasso; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Freckle Face Kid; Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Wayne Geeslin.**
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ness' Candy Pink, Rebel's Rosebud, Hunter's Mother's Love; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cupid's Jewel, Jolly Magic, Hunter's Candy Cane, **Dianne Campbell.**
- Best Trailer: Falling Snow, **Patricia DeLaTorre.**
- Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Comanche; Best Species: S. clone Sigi Falls, **Sam Cunningham.**
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Maxtimer'; Best in Design, **Elmer Godeny.**
- Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius.**

■ Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs, WI — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: K's Dancing Spree, Ma's Hickie, The Alps; Best Species: S. 5c1 clone *ionanthus*, S. 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, S. 5c2 clone *diplotrichus* Punter #6; Best Miniature: Jolly Sailor; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Orange Sherbet'; Best Species: S. 5c1 clone *ionanthus*; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner.**
- 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Newtown Quiet Resolve, Optimara myLove; Buckeye Happiness Is; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pink Buttercups, Eternal Orbit, Jolly Memory, **Arlene Garvens.**
- 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rebel's Meg, Rob's What Not, Jolly Butterfly, **Betsy Fox.**
- Best in Show/Best Standard: Rhapsodie Clementine; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Puppy Dreams, **Jerry VandeBerg.**

Building Maintenance Fund

Randy Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from October 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020 Total: $1,220

Geneva — $100-$499

Kathy Bell, Tucson, AZ
Elizabeth A. Fenske, St. Paul, MN
Sweetwater AVS, West Sayville, NY

Multicolor — $50-$99

Evelyn Boyer, Austin, TX
Carolyn Epstein, Rockville, MD
Judy Hanley, Midland, GA
Seattle AVS, WA
Johnnie Shepard, San Antonio, TX

Two-tone — $25-$49

Albuquerque AVC, NM
AVS of Philadelphia, PA
In lieu of judges' expenses
Luis Buschke, Morris Plains, NJ
Elaine Butler, San Francisco, CA
Carol Gilmore, Concord, NC
Martha Nix, Gerald, MO
Donna Powell, New Haven, CT
In memory of Edna Rourke
Diane Reinke, Silver Spring, MD
Gloria Vanderhorst, Chevy Chase, MD
Barbara and Charles Werness, Blaine, MN
In memory of Bill Foster

Thumbprint — Under $25

Billings Bloomers AVS, MT
In memory of Shanie Lee
Kate Brown, Madison, IN
Lynn Camp, Hamden, CT
Mary K. Chelton, Patchogue, NY
Gary Doll, Lancaster, PA

Thumbprint (continued)

Nancy Frost, Ocala, FL
Janet Graves, Hillsboro, MO
Sue Haffner, Clovis, CA
Alison Hutchinson, Lancaster, PA
Samira James, Teaneck, NJ
Joyce Juillard, Willis, TX
Jo Ann Levine, Billings, MT
Dorothy M. Lewis, Morgantown, IN
Elizabeth Long, Fairmont, NE
Eve C. Lorocca, Geneva, IL
Sharon Lynch, Norwood, NJ
Marian McGath, Omaha, NE
Janice Murasko, Milltown, NJ
Arnold Mueller, Vista, CA
North Star AV Council, Blaine, MN
Deborah Peterson, Englishtown, NJ
Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN
Barbara L. Robison, King George, VA
Sandra Sanders, Lebanon, OH
Linda Schuessler, Loudon, TN
Pamela Schwager, Neligh, NE
Betty Sigler, West Palm Beach, FL
Megan St. George, Royal Oak, MI
Geneva Stagg, Germantown, TN
TriState AVS, Morristown, NJ
In lieu of judging expense for Betsy Branson
Kathryn Walke, Richardson, TX
Tonya Weisensel, Poynette, WI
Roger Williams, Chicopee, MA
Susan Williams-Umstead, Lone Jack, MO
Terri L. Zongora, Bethlehem, PA

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Beginner's Luck

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: Pritchet, 1976
AVSA Honor Roll, 1983
Best in Show at
50th Anniversary Convention,
1996, for Kathy Lahti.
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rob's Fuddy Duddy

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Robinson, 1993
AVSA Honor Roll, 2014;
Tally Time, 2019
Best in Show at 1998 National
Convention for
Bev Promersberger.
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Ness' Crinkle Blue

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: D. Ness, 1995
AVSA Honor Roll, 1998;
Tally Time, 2019
Best in Show at 1997 National Convention for Pat Richards.
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Ness' Satin Rose

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: D. Ness, 1995
AVSA Honor Roll, 1999
Semiminiature

It's Almost Our 75th Anniversary!

By Carolee Carter, AVSA Publications Committee

Email: caroleeviolets@gmail.com

Are you aware that the African Violet Society of America is about to celebrate its 75th Anniversary? It's going to be the headline event at our annual convention next year in Atlanta, Georgia. Yes, it was in 1946 when a small band of dedicated growers met in Atlanta and decided to form a society dedicated to the culture of African violets, and the rest is history!

We met in Atlanta again in 1996 for the 50th anniversary celebration — and it was the first convention that I attended. I'll never forget the dramatic entrance to the awards banquet of those who stepped up to the costume challenge of dressing as Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara!

Celebrating Our History

AVSA will not be producing a 75th anniversary booklet to honor and update the past 25 years as we did for the 50th anniversary in 1996 (there are still a few copies available in the AVSA store). However, we will be sharing wonderful memories of the past in upcoming issues of *AVM*, culminating with the May/June 2021 issue that coincides with the convention. Here are a few things to which you can look forward:

Anne Thomas with her Buckeye collection at the 2007 Annual Convention in Denver. Photo by Mel Grice.

Yes, it was in 1946 when a small band of dedicated growers met in Atlanta ...

- A few of our Past AVSA Presidents will share their thoughts about how AVSA has evolved over the past 25 years.
- Some of our Commercial Members will look back and describe major changes in their business over the same period.
- Dr. Jeff Smith will devote a column along the way to major changes he has witnessed in hybridizing, as well as the pests or other maladies affecting our plants that weren't issues for us in the past.
- There will be photographs to take us down memory lane.

Please Celebrate With Us

And ... here's an assignment for you! If you have been a member of AVSA for more than 25 years, I'd love to receive a sentence or two revealing how you view the changes that have occurred in the African violet world. Send me an e-mail me at the address above, and I'll compile those responses into an enlightening future article for your reading pleasure.

So, stay tuned! We will have lots to share in the coming issues.

Celebrating 75 Years

African Violet Society of America

Atlanta

2021

75 YEARS

Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland St. NE | Atlanta, GA 30303

Sunday, May 30, 2021 ~ Sunday, June 6, 2021

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021
Show and Salesroom open to the public
9am to 5pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2021
Show | 9am to 4pm
Salesroom | 9am to 3pm

Hosted by: The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta

Visit avsa.org
for more info.

2021 Annual Convention: Celebrate AVSA's 75th Year in Atlanta!

By Kathy Spissman Tucker, Georgia

The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta will host AVSA's 75th Annual Convention Show and Sale in the great state of Georgia, in our capital city of Atlanta. This celebration and family reunion will take place at the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel in downtown Atlanta, May 30 through June 6, 2021. So, mark your calendars. Our theme is: **AVSA Diamond Jubilee — Celebrating African Violets Through the Years.**

Sheraton Atlanta in downtown Atlanta. Photo courtesy of Sheraton Atlanta.

Atlanta in a Few Words

Though Atlanta is sprawling with towering buildings made of glass and steel, it truly is a city in the forest, dotted with expansive green spaces. The urban oasis offers a multicultural experience but exudes Southern hospitality. Individuals from all walks of life add to the city's charm and personality.

The recently refreshed Centennial Olympic Park is the centerpiece of downtown Atlanta and is anchored by the Fountain of Rings, a reminder of the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Next door are attractions such as Georgia Aquarium, World of Coca-Cola and The National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Atlanta Streetcar is the city's modern-day trolley, carrying passengers from the convention and entertainment district to the city's east side.

> The urban oasis ... exudes Southern hospitality.

Atlanta's rich history comes to life in Sweet Auburn Historic District, once the wealthiest black community in America. The area is a focal point for the American civil rights movement featuring the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Park and Ebenezer Baptist Church.

The Olympic Rings in Centennial Park. Photo by James Duckworth, courtesy of ACVB and AtlantaPhotos.com.

In Atlanta, chef-run restaurants dish up modern American cuisine in strikingly beautiful spaces. The cutting-edge eateries include cozy diners, cafés and bistros. Local craft breweries sprinkle the city, creating an unofficial ale trail for visitors to enjoy.

Traveling to Atlanta

Atlanta began as a railroad terminus and remains a transportation hub, but with a 21st century appeal. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is the busiest airport in the world, and 80% of the U.S.

population lives within two hours by air. Visitors can roll into downtown directly from the airport by riding Atlanta's public rail system, MARTA.

Today, Atlanta welcomes more than 1 million visitors each year, and 71 countries have trade or consulate offices, giving our city a diverse economy. From arts and culture to music and cuisine, the city is full of multicultural opportunities for everyone.

It is easy to fall in love with this beautiful city that combines Southern charm with world-class attractions, award-winning dining and hidden wonders.

We look forward to seeing each of you in Atlanta as we celebrate 75 years with AVSA.

AVSA Drinkware

Order Yours Now!

AVSA has contracted with MD Engraving (Sioux Falls, SD), to bring you customizable drinkware products.

Perfect for the office or growing room. Great gift for outgoing officers or judges!

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Proceeds benefit the
African Violet Society of America Inc.

Is Bigger Really Better?

By Pat Hancock Middletown, Ohio

Recently, our Cincinnati African Violet Club had as our program, "The Pittman Story." We enjoyed the program a lot and while listening to the "Perfectly Pittman" story, one thing that Hortense said stood out to me.

Hortense showed two of her standard plants from when she first started hybridizing. She said that "big was great and she wanted big plants." Soon, she realized that really large plants always lacked blooms. She showed a picture of a 24-inch or greater plant and the amount of bloom in its center compared with a smaller standard with the same amount of bloom — in other words, a balanced plant. The larger plant had about four or five rows of leaves beyond the bloom layer and the weight of those leaves caused the foliage to fall down around the pot like an old-fashioned skirt. The smaller plant had leaves growing out from the center and lying flat; it looked more balanced.

I know that my Buckeyes can grow very large due to the size of the leaves. However, the reason I wanted larger leaves on the plants was so that a nice-sized standard plant could be grown with fewer leaves that grew to their proper space, covered the soil in the pot, and did not look like many leaves stacked on top of each other. In other words, each row fell in with the perfect symmetry. (The point of each row toward the crown fell between the two leaves below). A plant becomes round after about four rows of large leaves, and having more than two or three rows of leaves below the blooms starts to make the plant look out of balance.

> Having more than three rows of leaves below the blooms looks out of balance.

I chose to grow variegated plants, and their leaves nearly always have petioles that are not as strong as solid green ones (depending on the amount of green in the variegation, which equates to chlorophyll). When variegated violets grow larger than 15 to 18 inches, with many rows of leaves, they become heavy.

If plants lack chlorophyll because of too little green in the leaves, the leaf rows fall down around the pot instead of lying flat. They also lack enough bloom to look balanced and can lose half or more of the 25 points in judged shows for quantity of bloom.

Judges need to be able to see the pot size but the plant on the left hides the pot and the lower leaves touch the table (photo by Mel Grice). The plant on the right has three clear rows of leaves below the blooms, all lying flat (photo by Kurt Jablonski).

Leaves falling down around the pot also make it impossible for judges to see the pot size. A 20-inch or larger plant in a 4- or 5- inch pot is a 3-point deduction.

Hortense solved the problem by breeding smaller standards that had the proper amount of bloom for the size of the plants. This can be done by using plants with smaller leaves, but it can also be done by growers when they keep larger leaves but fewer rows of the leaves.

Judges need to judge plants for the balance between the size of the plant and the amount of bloom, not for size alone. A huge plant lacking bloom and with petioles too weak to lie flat is not what we should be looking for in our African violets.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Picasso

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: M. Tremblay, 1988
AVSA Honor Roll, 1997
Large Standard

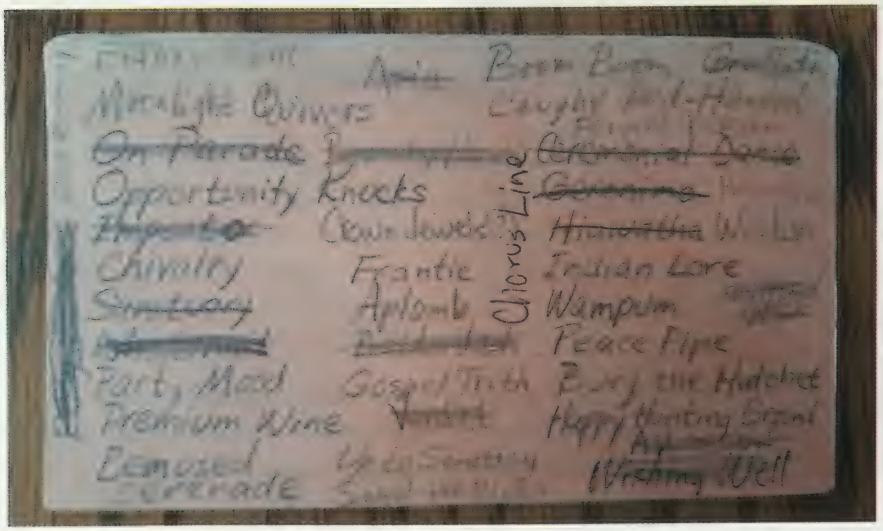
Naming Cultivars: The Late 1990s

By Teresa Odle editor@avsa.org

To celebrate AVSA's 75th Anniversary in 2021, we've been looking back at events and new hybrids that have come out in the past 25 years. I love learning about how names for plants came about, so I chose a few that stood out from the late 1990s — some from the late Kent Stork and some from Pat Hancock — to learn more about how clever hybridizers choose plant names. I talked with Joyce Stork and Pat Hancock to learn more.

Kent Stork—West Side Story and more

In 1997, two newly registered plants caught my eye. These were Officer Krupke and I Feel Pretty. I really wanted to ask Joyce if Kent had ever performed in the musical West Side Story. Here is what she said, "Kent loved musical theater, plays, and movies, but wasn't a performer until late in life." I asked if she had seen any of the West Side Story varieties in recent years, and she replied, "A lot of the Missouri Valley African Violet Council grew Kent's hybrids. It's been a while since I've seen the West Side Story hybrids in a show. His red hybrids are probably the ones most often seen in shows and Facebook posts."



Kent Stork kept a list of potential African violet names.

Joyce said Kent also had a strong religious faith (which was reflected in naming of Silent Prayer in 1998 and Benediction in 2001). According to Joyce, Kent has his ear trained to notice short, ear-catching names that might suit a violet. She generously shared a card she found in his records that shows notes about possible names for future hybrids. Since Joyce is known for her clever writing and marketing, I asked if she helped Kent name his plants. "Kent often bounced ideas off me for a reaction, but the names always originated with him," she says.

The 1990s represented Kent's busiest decade of hybridizing. "His first hybrid was Fogbound, which was registered in 1983, but probably germinated four or five years earlier," says Joyce. The introduction of Tomahawk in 1989 kicked off the busy hybridizing period. Kent passed away in 2017.

Pat Hancock and Doris

Another hybrid from the late 1990s that stood out to me was Buckeye Blame Doris, registered by Pat Hancock in 1997. It turns out this not only was a clever name, but among the first of Pat's registered Buckeye hybrids. And 1997 was a busy year for the Buckeye hybridizer. She registered 14 plants, although as Pat points out, the truly busy time began about four years before, in March 1994, when she was setting this first seedpod generation.

The name is for Doris Palm, one of Pat's closest friends and original organizers of her Dayton, Ohio, club. "Doris hated fantasy blossoms," says Pat. Buckeye Blame Doris was the only cultivar from that

seedpod with solid colors, so she honored her friend with its blame/name. One of the parent plants was Peach Sundae, with a ruffled pansy blossom, from David Heath. "He gave me my first seed pod and a leaf of Peach Sundae and encouraged me to get started hybridizing," she says. The fantasy parent was June Swift's Mermaid. June Swift also was a great help and mentor to Pat as she began crossing plants. "I feel it is important to know the background of plants when you use them to hybridize, and June Swift shared that information, as did Kent Stork," says Pat. She tended to choose their plants as parents because she knew the past few generations of the parents.

Although Pat "blamed" her friend for the lack of fantasy in one of her first registered Buckeyes, which had semidouble pink-fuchsia pansy blossoms, she credits Doris with lots of contributions to the African violet world in the 1990s and beyond. Doris was one of the first people to spot and discuss impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV) in African violets. "Doris wanted growers to know INSV was showing up in violets and she was brave enough to write about it, show pictures, and make sure we brought it up at convention," Pat says. Unfortunately, Doris died before that 2005 convention in nearby Cincinnati. "She was a real asset to educating people about the INSV problem, which was decimating collections around that time," says Pat.

Pat credits Doris with lots of contributions to the African violet world.

Pat's basic naming convention for Buckeyes has been alphabetical, with a few names from her poodles thrown in. With nearly 30 years of hybridizing, Pat has "been through the alphabet several times."

Got Old Photos?

By Teresa Odle • Email: editor@avsa.org

We are gathering photos of people and plants of the past 25-plus years to feature in our anniversary celebrations. If you have photos from past conventions or local club meetings, we would love to see them. We're looking for photos of people, plus people with their plants. Scanned and digital photos should be at least 1,024 pixels on their smallest side. If you have no scanner, you can mail print photos to me at P.O. Box 1828, Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346. I will scan and return them.

SECTION XI
CLASS 68
INTERPRETIVE FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS
"Take Me Back to Tulsa!"
(Use colors black & white with red or pink blooms)

Looking back to Tulsa in 2008. Photo by Mel Grice.

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Jim Boyer — Palm Harbor, FL

JB's King James
•(11252) 02/08/2020 •J. Boyer
•Single chimera white sticktite pansy/red stripe.
•Medium green, plain, ovate.
•Standard.

Belinda Thibodeaux — Patterson, LA

Cajun's Bridal Show
•(11253) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Single-semidouble white ruffled pansy.
•Variegated dark green and white, serrated.
•Standard.

Cajun's Ella Grace
•(11254) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Single-semidouble blue frilled star/thin white edge.
•Variegated medium green and white, serrated.
•Standard.

Cajun's Just My Style
•(11255) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Semidouble lavender ruffled pansy/random raspberry band, thin white edge.
•Variegated medium green and white, serrated.
•Standard.

Cajun's Just One Kiss
•(11256) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Semidouble-double light pink frilled star/raspberry band, variable green edge.
•Variegated medium green, cream and pink, serrated. •Standard.

Cajun's Rum Boogie
•(11257) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Single magenta sticktite pansy/white edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and white, serrated.
•Standard.

Cajun's Southern Belle
•(11258) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Single-semidouble pink two-tone ruffled star.
•Variegated medium-dark green and white, serrated. •Standard.

Cajun's Sweet Sensation
•(11259) 03/11/2020 •B. Thibodeaux
•Double light pink ruffled star/blue fantasy.
•Variegated medium green and white, ruffled.
•Standard.

Chung-tong Shek — Hong Kong, China

Sweet Pupper
•(11260) 04/15/2020 •C. Shek
•Single chimera pink pansy/lavender fantasy, green stripe.
•Dark green, pointed, quilted, serrated. •Standard.

Samuel Cunningham — Houston, TX

Samwize Green Ghost
•(11261) 04/17/2020 •S. Cunningham/W. Carter
•Single-semidouble white to pale yellow ruffled pansy/random green edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and white, quilted/red back. •Semiminiature.

Registration Change

The following has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

Peaceful Sleep
•(11203) – Add ", random white edge." to blossom description (after "fantasy").

In Memory

Nancy Carr

Nancy Carr, a long-time member of the Columbus African Violet Society, passed away April 5, 2020. She also was a valued member of the Ohio State African Violet Society and had achieved the rank of Senior Judge at the national level. Nancy had served in many positions at the local and state level, including president, treasurer, secretary, and membership chair.

Nancy also served as an AVSA Director at the national level. She and her late husband, Richard, had organized many outings at the national conventions.

To every fellow grower, Nancy was a friend and mentor, contributing her skills, knowledge, and passions. She was especially interested in petrocosmeas and longifolia violets. Her program presentations were informative and well organized so that we always came away feeling that we, too, could improve our skills. As fellow club members, we all benefited from her gifts. Nancy, we miss you. Happy Growing.

Sue Stout

Sue Stout, of Tucson, Arizona, passed away on May 13, 2020, after a short battle with cancer. Sue came to Tucson in 1992 to work at Raytheon until she retired in 2008. While at Raytheon, she was the coordinator for the many Red Cross blood drives that were held there.

Sue was an active member of the Tucson African Violet Society (TAVS) and a past TAVS board member. She especially loved to grow episcias and had quite a collection. Our raffles often contained an *Episcia* donated by Sue. The TAVS will miss our cheerful member.

Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership

Is there someone in your local African violet club who takes on every duty asked of them and goes above and beyond? We want to honor a special club member with the Hudson Award for Affiliate Leadership. AVSA presents this award every year at the national convention to one very deserving person. Please take the time to complete a nomination form found on our website, www.avsa.org. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Hall at linda.hall6641@hotmail.com.

Digital *AVM* Available with This Issue

We're excited to announce that every AVSA member now can read *AVM* online, in print or both! Beginning with this July/August 2020 issue, we will post a digital version of each issue for any member to access. Read on for benefits and details.

Benefits

Having a print version of your magazine means you can hold it in your hand or cut out a few "pin-ups" to hang in your growing room. All members of AVSA still will receive a print magazine in the mail unless they choose to select the green, digital-only option the next time they renew membership. Those who choose a digital *AVM* only screen only will pay a little less for membership and maybe save a few trees.

Here are a few other benefits of the digital *AVM*:

- The digital PDF file has active links throughout. Click directly on any email or website address in an article or ad to connect right from your phone, tablet or computer.
- You also can click on our Commercial Members' ads. No need to make a mental reminder to visit their site later. (And isn't impulse buying the best kind?)
- Always access the magazine by the first day of its issue month. If you tend to get your magazine later than friends because of bulk mail issues, no worries. Each digital issue will be online by the first day of the issue month (or sooner). So, this July/August issue was posted by July 1.
- The digital PDF also has links within the magazine. You can jump right from the Table of Contents or Index of Advertisers to the article, photo or ad you want to see.
- You also can search within PDFs. Maybe want to see every photo or mention of a trailer in an issue. Search for "trailer" and it will take you to each instance.
- PDF documents are easy to read on any digital device and a standard format. Just be sure your phone, computer or tablet has a (free) Adobe PDF reader.

Points to Remember

We hope you will work with us as we introduce this new member benefit, and most importantly, we ask that you follow the honor system by not sharing this member benefit with nonmembers. Here are a few other points:

- Find two issues on the webpage (avsa.org/digitalAVM) at all times. The latest issue will be ready for members to view by its issue date, and the previous issue will remain online a total of four months, then rotate off. If you want to keep the digital *AVM,* you must download it before its online time expires. Just save it as a file on your computer or device.

- Every AVSA member with a valid email address will receive future issues as an email attachment in addition to access on the AVSA website.
- You must be logged in as a member to access the page.
- Look for a tutorial on the digital *AVM* page to learn more about how to zoom in or out and to click on links.
- Remember that photos in the digital PDF can look grainy (pixelated) when zooming in. We must lower the resolution of the PDF for timely loading and to keep it from hogging space in your computer.
- Many of the links require that the editor add them manually, and it's possible to miss one or two. But we'll do our best to make sure the digital magazine is completely clickable and helpful.

If you need help with the digital AVM, please contact Teresa Odle, editor@avsa.org

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Aca's Libbie

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: J. Brownlie, 1997
Semiminiature

AVM Article Contest: Even More Exciting for 2020-2021

By Pat Hancock Middletown, Ohio

For the 2020-2021 article contest, we've added a twist that members will love and even more prizes! The top three winners will receive:

- First prize: 40 leaves, a Buckeye Requiem leaf, and a one-year membership to AVSA.
- Second: 20 leaves and a six-month membership.
- Third: 10 leaves and a six-month membership.

And here is the exciting twist: These top prizes again include leaves of new introductions from generous hybridizers, plus five of AVSA's top winning growers/exhibitors are generously offering to send leaves from their favorite show plants. Those exhibitors participating are:

- Wayne Geeslin — Texas
- Kurt Jablonski — Florida
- Debbie McInnis — Indiana
- Sandra Skalski — New Jersey
- Terri Vicenzi (streps) — Indiana

Five commercial hybridizers will send leaves from new hybrids (see page 58). This year's contributors are:

- Joan Baker, Rivermist Violets
- Paul Sorano, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
- Linda Abplanalp, Carolina Violets
- Steve and Donna Turner, Russian Violets
- Susan Miller and Nancy Haffelder, Violet Peddlers Plus

Contest Rules

We won't be awarding prizes for each issue this year but have added to the top prizes to keep you excited through all six magazine issues. We're looking for articles on any topic related to growing and showing African violets and gesneriads. Anyone who enters a feature article and marks it as a contest entry is eligible, except for our prize donors and judges. See the contest rules and tips for submitting on our website, www.avsa.org/magazine.

The top winner in the contest receives a leaf of Buckeye Requiem. Exhibited by Debbie McInnis. Photo by Winston Goretsky.

Special thanks to last year's judges and to our 2020/2021 panel:

- Sue Hoffmann, coordinator — Virginia
- Lynn Lombard — Washington
- Diane Miller — California
- Paul Kroll — New York
- Donna Vogelpohl — Ohio
- Penny Wichman — Kentucky

We hope to continue to receive excellent articles and innovative approaches to growing. If you have questions, contact Teresa Odle at editor@avsa.org.

Congratulations to Our Article Contest Winners!

It's time to announce the winners of our 2019-2020 *AVM* article contest. We offer big congratulations to Bill Chaney of LaPine, Oregon. His article, "Pesticides: Understanding the Available Tools," from the November/December 2019 issue, is the top winner and was a "fan favorite." Bill will receive a free one-year membership to AVSA and 10 Buckeye leaves.

Second place goes to Kit Love of Odessa, Texas, for her article "Bloom Stem Propagation" from May/June 2020, (which placed first for the May/June issue). Kit will receive six months of AVSA membership and five Buckeye leaves.

Third prize goes to Geraldine Silva of Springerville, Arizona, for her July/August 2019 article, "Handy Tips for African Violet Lovers." Geraldine will receive six months membership in AVSA and three Buckeye leaves.

All these top winners received prizes as weather allowed from generous hybridizers. If you haven't yet read these great articles, be sure to look at your back issues. And use them as inspiration to enter this year's contest (see previous page). Thank you to Pat Hancock, Sue Hoffmann, and all the judges and hybridizers who made the contest possible. *AVM* readers appreciate the effort!

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy Deutsch

Donations received from October 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020 Total: $365

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Plants from *AVM* Article Contest Contributors

The following photos are from some of the generous donors to this year's article contest winners. We just want to give you a taste of their talents for hybridizing and growing show plants. So, be sure to enter by March 1, 2021.

New introductions from Paul Sorano at Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses: Sentimental Journey (l); Right as Rain (c); Speckled Halo (r).

Sample Buckeye plants from Violet Peddlers Plus: Buckeye Clown N' Around (l); Buckeye Nostalgia (c); Buckeye Deja Blue.

Sample streps from exhibitor Terri Vicenzi: Raydar's Molly (l); Kahinta (c); Femme Fatale (r).

African Violets as Decoration and Inspiration

By Minnelli Lucy France

Email: theorchidartist@outlook.com

African violets might lack the fragrance and taste of some plants we grow, but they certainly make up for that with their gorgeous color, foliage and shape. Hybrids and cultivars offer a beautiful array of candy colors, and many have names of sweets to match, such as peppermint, cake and sugar. Many also have luscious curly shapes to their petals. Their foliage can grow into wonderful wheels or carousels, and they have many unique patterns of green coloration on their leaves and textures, thus adding even more elegance to them.

The blossom of Rebel's Splatter Kake. Illustration copyright of Minnelli Lucy France.

It is common among houseplant collectors, gardeners and African violet enthusiasts to arrange these attractive plants in their collections into almost any theme of decor because they are so incredibly versatile. These ornamental houseplants have a broad range of colors, shades and hues, so they offer many decorative uses. They add the perfect touch to a home by growing on a windowsill, or they can enhance plant groupings. They also make great additions to basket decorations, as well as jazzing up a holiday table spread as a centerpiece or even as party favors for guests. It's no wonder that Better Homes & Gardens Magazine refers to the African violet as "The Prom Queen of Houseplants."

I enjoy the violets I grow. Most of all, as a botanical illustrator and floral fine artist, I love to paint and illustrate African violets. Some gardeners want portraits of their favorite plants, and I find that each lovely African violet has its own personality, which I enjoy capturing. I call them "plant pets" since they are living things that help make us happy and bring joy into our lives and environment.

I have been deeply inspired by the wild African violet (*Streptocarpus ionanthus/Saintpaulia* and *S. teitensis/Saintpaulia*) in particular because violet and the related orchid pink are my favorite colors. I'm also inspired by the hybrids and cultivars because so many have such a whimsical chromatic spectrum with a strong hue cycle of the purplish pinks. It's no wonder why I love to paint and illustrate these confectionary-colored botanicals.

Side view of an African violet. Illustration copyright of Minnelli Lucy France.

Lest We Forget

The African Violet Society of America recognizes members of both the society and the hobby community who have died in 2019 and 2020. They were our leaders, our mentors and our friends, and they are missed.

Are you aware of a club member or violet friend whose name is missing from the memorial list? Please submit additional names (including the home state or country) to office@avsa.org or by mail to AVSA P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont TX 77720. It is better for AVSA to receive a name multiple times than for no one to share it. Thank you for your assistance.

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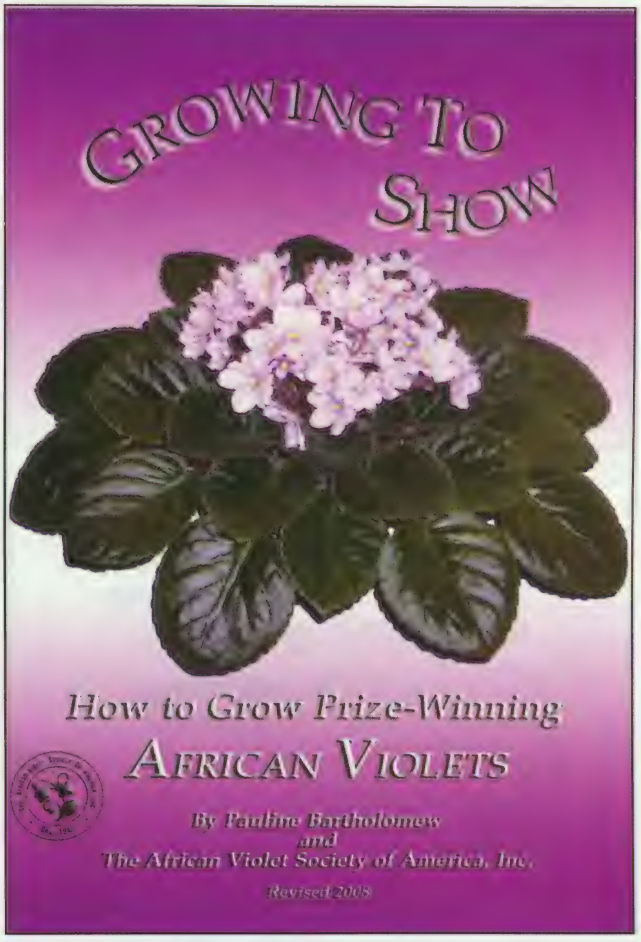

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 73 Number 5

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AVSA 75th Anniversary
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AVSA Honor Roll, 2005
Large Standard
Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

FEATURES

One Soil Does Not Fit All—Pat Hancock 6
Write an Article on Regional Growing 7
New Digital Membership—Steve Covolo 8
Get the Most from Your Digital *AVM* 9
Getting the Most Out of Leaves—Karyn Cichocki 12
AVSA 75th Anniversary Photos 15
Growing Trailers: A 12-Step Program—Cristy Boothe 16
David Senk: African Violet Trailblazer—Rich Follett 18
Necessity: The Mother of Invention—Paul Kroll 32
Tips and Techniques 34
Keeping Track of Your Collection—Amy Cash-Allison 36
An Interview with a Show-Winning Violet—Susan Shaw 38
A Retrospect from AVSA Past Presidents—Carolee Carter 44
Celebrating AVSA 2000 to 2005—Teresa Odle 48
AVSA 75th Anniversary Photos 49
Do Your Trailers Need a Makeover?—Paul Kroll 50
AVSA Recognition 55
Let's Go to the Library!—Richard Craft 56
Minutes of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. 60
Combined Financial Statement 61
Interested in Serving on the AVSA Board? 62

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Smooch Me—75th Anniversary 5
Rob's Fuzzy Navel—75th Anniversary 10
Rob's Sticky Wicket—75th Anniversary 11
Rob's Galiwinku—75th Anniversary 11
Johnny Angel—Debbie McInnis 24
***Streptocarpus* 'Canterbury Surprise'**—Sherrie Zimmerman 24
Windy Day—75th Anniversary 25
Baby Brian—75th Anniversary 25
Frozen in Time—75th Anniversary 31
Chrysothemis pulchella—Robbie McMeel 35
Milky Way Trail, Unusual Container—Dolores Gibbs 35
Rainbow's Quiet Riot—75th Anniversary 43
Best Texas-hybridized Collection—Kurt Jablonski 57
Cajun's Lil Forever Blue—Mary Corondan 57
Persian Prince—75th Anniversary 58
Orchard's Bumble Magnet—75th Anniversary . . 59
B-Man's Palma—75th Anniversary 59

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser 3
Editor's Notes—Teresa Odle 4
AVSA Office Update—Amy Carruth 5
Coming Events 21
Family Portrait—Paul Kroll 22
Shows and Judges Column—Mary Corondan . . 26
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 28
Affiliate Update—Jeri Anderson 30
Boyce Edens Research Fund—Randy G. Deutsch . . 34
Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 37
Building Maintenance Fund—Randy G. Deutsch 39
Barbara Burde Endowment Fund—Randy G. Deutsch 42
Registration Report—Joe Bruns 52
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 54
In Memory 54

CONVENTION

Celebrating 75 Years: Atlanta 2021 40
2021 Annual Convention—Kathy Spissman . . . 41

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Index Of Advertisers

Amazon Smile—AVSA 33
AVS of Canada 63
AVSA Drinkware 14
Bloomlala Apparel 21
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 63
Gesneriad Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Glenda's House of Violets 63
Growing to Show—AVSA 27
Indoor Gardening Supplies ..... Inside Back Cover
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery ..... Inside Back Cover
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 63
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 23
Physan 20 64
Swift Moist-Rite Planter ..... Inside Back Cover
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Peddlers Plus 64
Violet Supply 63

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

To Our AVSA Friends:

As I write this column today our weather here in Texas is forecast to be in the 80s but our hot summer weather will return later in the week. Let's hope these next few months are cooler.

With our Virtual Convention behind us, we have been thinking about the opportunity to showcase our plants at fall shows. Yet many, if not all, local and regional affiliate shows have been cancelled due to the continuing COVID-19 outbreak. Continue to grow and maintain your African violet and gesneriad collections because there WILL be shows and conventions in the future. Our Atlanta hosts are eagerly anticipating our members bringing many violets and gesneriads to Atlanta in 2021 to fill the showroom with beautiful exhibits and designs.

Boyce Edens Scholarship

Congratulations to our 2020 to 2021 AVSA Boyce Edens College Scholarship recipient, Sonia Munoz, a graduate student at Texas A & M Kingsville, majoring in plant and soil science with an emphasis in entomology. Our Scholarship Chair, Dr. Charles Ramser, will share more information in the future about Sonia, along with application information for the 2021 to 2022 Scholarship.

2021 Convention and Show

Sharon Gartner, Convention Show Awards Chair, will be preparing the list of Special Awards soon. Please contact her if you would like to donate an award for the 2021 75th Anniversary AVSA Convention and Show in Atlanta, Georgia. Kathy Spissman and her 2021 AVSA Convention Committees, along with Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, are hard at work planning the 2021 Convention and Show in Atlanta.

We always welcome invitations and suggestions from different areas of the country to host a convention. Please contact Kathy Lahti or me.

New Membership Software

Amy Carruth, office manager, reports that implementation of the new iMIS membership software is progressing and will go "live" soon. When it is fully implemented it will manage our membership function and other office functions. Please be patient as we implement this new software.

Nominations

The AVSA Nominating Committee and its Chair, Linda Hall, welcome applications for director, secretary and third vice president positions this year. To become an officer, an applicant must have served on the Board of Directors for two years. If you or someone you know would like to submit an application, go to the member portion of the website (avsa.org/documents) for the application.

Your AVSA Executive Committee and Committee Chairs always are looking for members who possess a special talent. We would like to hear from you. We appreciate all our volunteers do to help our society meet the needs of our membership.

We continue to encourage you to share your concerns, suggestions or information with us, your Executive Committee. Our contact information is on page 2 of *AVM* and on the website. Your Executive Committee has been meeting electronically and will meet again in the near future. If you have concerns or items for us to consider, please contact me and we will address them at our next meeting. Please remember, through our two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Editor's Notes

By Teresa Odle

Email: editor@avsa.org

First, I want to once again thank all AVSA members who write such high-quality articles for *African Violet Magazine.* Those writing contest entries have really stepped up their game, sharing unique approaches to growing and showing African violets. This year's contest won't award prizes for each issue, but the judges already are at work reviewing and selecting entries for the top prizes. You can enter this year's contest through the May/June 2021 issue (deadline March 1), so get those ideas put to paper or screen!

I also want to thank the generous people who write regular articles. These experienced growers share excellent tips and techniques with our readers. Many writers are beginning to interview growers and hybridizers they know so *AVM* readers can learn more about some of the innovators and leaders in the African violet world. I appreciate the articles and encourage you all to continue writing.

Digital Membership

We've been talking about a digital version of *AVM* for months. I am happy to report that all issues now will be online by the first day of their issue month (such as September 1 for this issue) for four months. Any member can link to and download the digital version of *AVM* to save, search and link from. I've heard from several people who are ready to switch to a digital-only membership, so learn more about that on page 8. Meanwhile, grab those hesitant friends, neighbors or family members and let them know AVSA now has several membership options.

Editorial Board Chair

Members of the Editorial Board help make *AVM* more relevant for our readers, and I want to thank them for their ongoing help. In particular, special thanks go to Paul Kroll, convening chair of the Editorial Board, for his support and guidance from the time I became editor more than two years ago. Paul is stepping down as chair, but will continue to help and contribute excellent articles like the ones in this issue.

> We are looking for more articles about regional growing.

I am excited to welcome Dale Martens as new Editorial Board chair. Dale has excellent experience as a columnist and editor in several gesneriad-related organizations. She also is active in the AVSA and in helping African violet growers through social media and AVSA presentations. I welcome Dale to our team and look forward to her input.

This month, we are looking for more articles about regional growing. Even though we keep our African violets safely inside all year, factors like humidity, heat, and cold affect the growing medium and watering practices we use to keep the plants healthy. We tend to learn the hard way in both outdoor gardening and with African violets that "one size does not fit all." For an example, see Pat Hancock's article about soil on page 6. I would love to feature several articles from growers around the country and world. How do you adjust your soil mix? How do you control the temperature in your growing environment?

I hope some of you will share your lessons learned and clever approaches to solving environmental effects on your plants and how you care for them. Be sure to mark your article as a contest entry if you'd like to enter.

AVSA Office Update

By Amy Carruth

P.O. Box 22417 • Beaumont, TX 77720
Email: office@avsa.org

In a recent issue of *AVSA News,* it was stated that members with a current email address will receive a digital copy of the magazine via email. Although that is not the case, members can access a digital copy of the magazine in the members' section of the website. To log in to the members' section, you will need your membership number and your last name exactly as it appears on your *AVM* mailing label.

We have purchased a new software program for our membership database. Once this goes live, our members will be able to access and edit their membership information and renew their membership, all online through our website. This is an exciting time for AVSA! More details will be coming soon. Please send the AVSA office your current email address with your member number to help us update your information for the new system. If you have an Associate Member residing in your home, please send their membership number and email address as well.

We have had several calls about renewals and new memberships not being processed via the mail or magazines not being received. I have spoken to our local post office to get matters resolved. **In the meantime, if you have any issues, please contact the AVSA office as soon as possible.**

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Smooch Me

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: K. Stork
Best in Show,
2000, for Nancy Price
Standard

One Soil Does Not Fit All

By Pat Hancock Middletown, Ohio

I started growing violets for show in the early 1990s. I have probably tried more soil recipes than cookie recipes — and I make a lot of cookies. In the early 1990s, I also met Marie Burns and she was kind enough to share her soil recipe with me. Her beautiful show plants were advertising enough for her soil.

Marie's recipe had a base of "Baccto African violet soil" with the addition of perlite, vermiculite and dolomite lime to regulate the pH. It also contained dehydrated cow manure. Baccto was a wonderful soil and I still would be using it except Baccto quit making it. Marie knew of a farm store that carried the soil and we drove to Maryland to get all they had left. We had the employees going high into the storage area to find every bag. My share of our haul lasted me about six months.

Trying New Recipes

Kent Stork was using a recipe that was about one-half peat moss and one-half bark with perlite, vermiculite, charcoal and dolomite lime. I drove to Chillicothe (on the other side of Ohio) to pick up some bark at a school. It had been sitting outside for a while and to my regret, it was full of mealybug eggs. Mealybugs were the worst in those days, before we had Marathon.

After that, for some time, I cooked my soil in the oven. The smell was really bad and we usually went out to eat on "soil-cooking days." About that time, I heard of a soil additive called "super soil." It was made by Jim Wright in Georgia. It was all organic, containing blood meal, cottonseed meal, bone meal, wood ashes, and several other organic ingredients. I added peat moss, perlite, vermiculite, charcoal, dolomite and dehydrated cow manure.

I grew my best plants in that soil. When Jim died, I had to come up with a new soil recipe once again. By this time, many good growers were using PRO-MIX in varying recipes. At first, I used PRO-MIX BX, with all the usual additives. Later, I switched to 9 to 10 parts PRO-MIX HP, along with five parts of Happy Frog Potting Soil, 10 or 11 parts perlite, a handful of fine (seed-starting) vermiculite, a handful of charcoal, and 1 tablespoon of molasses powder. Both of my clubs also use this recipe. It works great in Ohio.

> The right soil can win ribbons for you.

Different Soil for Different Environments

About three years ago, I got a rude awakening. I have always advised people to make their own soil and I have always shared my recipes when asked. I shared my recipe with a grower who lives in Hawaii. She called a few weeks later with the news that it had killed her plants.

I really had not realized how much the humidity in a location had to do with selecting soil ingredients. In Hawaii, her plants' roots had rotted because they were too wet. My soil was "too heavy" for her very humid environment. She needed a soil with much more perlite and no vermiculite. People who live in Arizona or other dry climates need a soil with less perlite and more vermiculite. In other words — depending on where you live and the kind of climate you have, "one soil does not fit all."

It is always wise to check with "good growers" in your own area about the soil proportions that work best in your climate. The right soil can win ribbons for you. The wrong soil can make you want to give up.

We're Looking for Articles on Regional Growing

By Teresa Odle • Email: editor@avsa.org

We love receiving all articles about growing African violets and gesneriads, so please keep submitting, and mark your contribution as a contest entry if you'd like to enter.

Maybe it's because I live in a place with wild temperature extremes and average indoor humidity of less than 20 percent, but I often wonder how to adjust growing advice based on my violets' environment. So, I am looking for some feature articles this year about "regional growing." Even though we grow our violets indoors, what happens outside can affect how we care for the plants and various challenges we must overcome.

It would be fun and helpful to see some local advice from around the country and world — based either on geography or indoor conditions (such as natural vs. artificial light, growing in basements vs. living areas). Make the most of all your trial and error to help a fellow grower facing similar challenges. Thanks!

Correction: July/August 2020 *AVM*

We have a few corrections to make to the July/August *AVM*.

Virtual Convention Prizes

AVSA inadvertently left Violet Peddlers Plus off the list of generous Commercial Members who donated prizes for our Virtual Convention and Show (page 11 in the July/August issue of *AVM*).

We have added Violet Peddlers Plus to the list of donors on the virtual convention site and want to thank them again for donating prizes.

Contest Awards

The Article Contest prizes on page 56 should be revised to read: First prize in the 2020-2021 contest receives: 32 leaves from eight generous contributors and a one-year membership to AVSA.

Second prize: 16 leaves from eight sources and a six-month membership.

Third prize: 8 leaves from our contributors and a six-month membership.

Special thanks to Pat Hancock for coordinating the awards, to Sue Hoffmann for overseeing judging and to all the generous hybridizers and exhibitors who mail prizes to winners.

Now, get busy submitting!

New Digital Membership

By Steve Covolo, Membership Chair

Email: memberpromo@avsa.org

The time has arrived! There is a new membership option coming available for African violet growers; it's called an Individual Digital Membership. Our membership has been asking for this option, and we've been listening.

About the New Option

What is an Individual Digital Membership, you ask? Members now can select to receive their *African Violet Magazine* only digitally; AVSA will not mail them a hard copy of the *AVM* via USPS. Instead, those members who choose this option will read the magazine online in the membership content section at www.avsa.org/digitalAVM. The new option became available for purchase beginning August 15, 2020. The cost of the Individual Digital Membership is $28 per year, and only individual and international individual members will have this choice.

Our new digital membership offers considerable savings for international members, including those living in Canada. Canadian and International members will see membership savings ranging from $12 to $32 (US dollars) a year. Individual U.S. members will save $7 per year.

Again, those members who opt for the digital membership will not receive a hard copy of the *AVM* in the mail. The digitized *AVM* will be available to read on AVSA's website by the first day of every month in which an issue publishes. There currently are two issues available in digital format on the website at all times; you can download them to your devices or files to keep them for later reference.

Selecting Membership Options

We can't offer prorated discounts for members wanting to switch to digital membership during their current membership period. So, upon your renewal date, you'll have the option of selecting the standard membership or new Individual Digital Membership option.

> Both memberships still include all benefits of joining AVSA ...

All current and renewing Individual Members will continue to receive the *AVM* via USPS, plus a digital version, all at the current price of $35. All International and Canadian members who choose not to select the Individual Digital Membership also will continue to pay the current price of their membership if they want both a printed and digital version of *AVM*.

Please spread the word. All new members who want to join AVSA as an Individual Digital Member and current members who want to change options on their renewal dates can go to AVSA.org. Then click on the link that reads "Join AVSA," scroll to the middle of the page, and click on the hyperlink; this will take you to the membership options page. You also can renew using the information on the cardboard cover of the magazine.

The benefits of the Individual Digital Membership are instant access, a lower membership fee, no bulk mail delays, searchable PDFs, and active/clickable links to advertisers and information. Plus, it's great for the environment. Both memberships still include all benefits of joining AVSA, such as discounts in our store. Learn more about the digital *AVM* in the July/August 2020 issue, starting on page 54, and in the tutorial on the Digital *AVM* webpage.

Here's How to Get the Most from Your Digital *AVM*

Not all AVSA members are tech fans, so here are the steps to take if you want to read and save the digital version of each issue of *African Violet Magazine*. If you have problems, contact the editor, Teresa Odle, at editor@avsa.org.

Step 1: Access the Magazine

Go to the AVSA Website. On or about the first day of each issue month (such as September 1), and log in as a member on the AVSA website, www.avsa.org. If you're not sure how to log in, click on the button near the upper left (Member Login Instructions) of the home page. Have your member no. handy (it's on the mailing label portion of the white cardboard cover that protected this issue).

Once you know you are logged in, click "Member Content" on the left menu. The site will take you to a new page with another left menu. There, click the second button called "*AVM* Current Issue Digitized." You also can just go directly to this page by typing www.avsa.org/digitalAVM into your browser search bar or clicking to the digital version from the magazine page (avsa.org/magazine) if you already are logged in.

The page contains some introductory information and links to a tutorial that goes into more detail on how to view (zoom text for easier reading) and link. Click the tutorial if you need help or want to learn more. Then, scroll down to the current year and you will see a link to the most recent issue on top, followed by the prior issue. Click the link and you are there.

Step 2: Download a Copy if You Like

As a member, you can freely download and keep this digital version of *AVM* for your own use. If you choose a Digital Membership, be sure to download each issue within a few months before it recycles off the page. Even if you still get a print magazine, you can refer to this digital copy to search topics, names, events or articles and to link directly to advertisers online.

Here's how to download the issue: Depending on your browser, you should see an arrow that points down toward a line (next to a printer icon), usually when you move your pointer up to the top of the page. Click that download button, then save the issue as you would any photo, document or other download to your phone, tablet or computer.

Step 3: Honor Copyright

The purpose of the digital version of AVSA's magazine is to add to member benefits and flexibility. If members share the magazine, or even a portion of it, with nonmembers without permission, they are hurting themselves in the long run (and breaking copyright law…). Instead, tell people about the magazine, print or digital, but please don't share it. We trust our members and would rather not complicate your access by adding all sorts of password protection to the issues.

Step 4: Enjoy

With the digital issue, you can click on links to photos and articles directly from the Table of Contents, and to ads directly from the Index of Advertisers. You also can click from our ads to websites or email addresses of Commercial Members.

Learn more about how to read and navigate a PDF with the tutorial on the *AVM* Current Issue Digitized Page.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rob's Fuzzy Navel

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Won Best in Show for Kathy Lahti, 2005
Semiminiature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rob's Sticky Wicket

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Honor Roll, 2000
Semiminiature Trailer

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rob's Galiwinku

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Tally Time, 2003 and 2019
Semiminiature Trailer

Contest Entry —

Getting the Most Out of That Violet Leaf

By Karyn Cichocki Lafayette, New Jersey

Email: kdc05@ptd.net

I've been growing African violets from leaves since the mid-1970s. Before I joined a club in 1982, I started African violets the same way my mom did. She would fill either a glass jar or juice glass halfway with water and cover the top with a piece of aluminum foil. She then would poke a hole in the foil and place the leaf stem through the hole and into the water. The stem wasn't cut at an angle as we have been taught to do. She placed the glass/jar on her kitchen windowsill, and after a short time, the leaf would start growing roots and then plantlets. Both my grandmothers would start leaves the same way.

Early Struggles

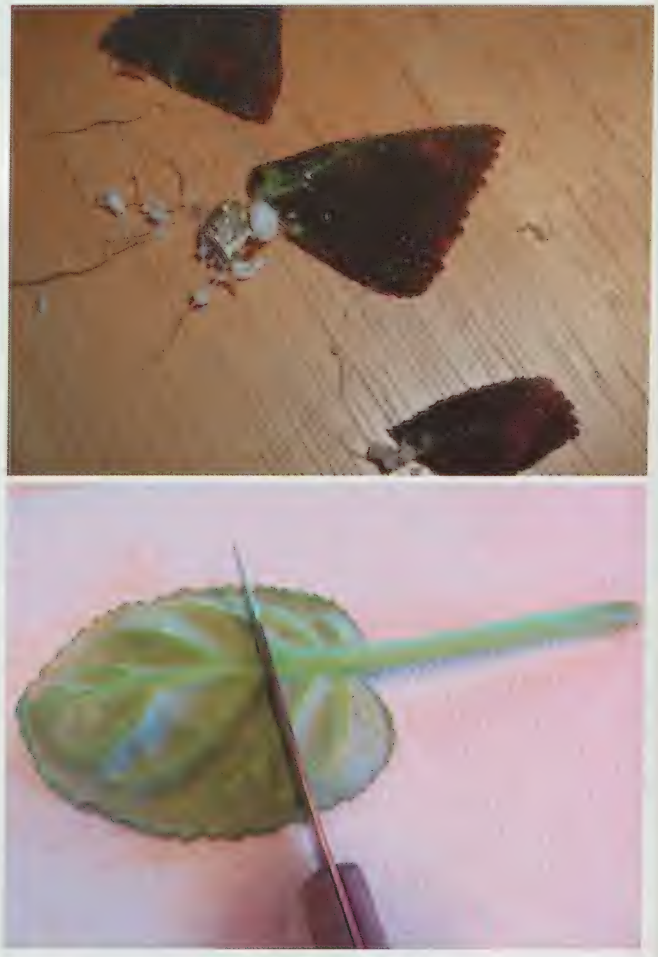
Although I have memories of seeing jars with rooted leaves in them, I don't remember what happened afterward. So, when I started growing African violets from leaves, I followed the same early procedure and then struggled getting the plantlets to survive once I transplanted them. I found out later this was because the roots were used to being in water, and once I put them into regular potting soil, they had trouble breathing.

Once I joined a club, I learned about starting leaves in soil, cutting the stem at an angle. I eventually learned not to pot up every single little plantlet and to take only the largest, or possibly the largest two, if the second plantlet looked good. Like many newbies, I was disappointed with the lack of success I had with all those little plantlets I potted up from each leaf I started.

Propagating Gesneriads

After moving to New Jersey in 1995, I joined a local Gesneriad Society chapter. My love for propagating African violets for my local club show carried over to the gesneriad chapter. Over the years, I've learned how to propagate a variety of gesneriads by leaves. I've found the best method for my conditions is to take a clear plastic box with a lid (for large-scale propagation, I use an old acrylic sweater box, but any clear plastic container with a cover will do), put a layer of damp perlite in it and then cover that with a layer of damp, chopped-up sphagnum moss.

You don't want either the perlite or the moss to be too wet or the plant material will rot.

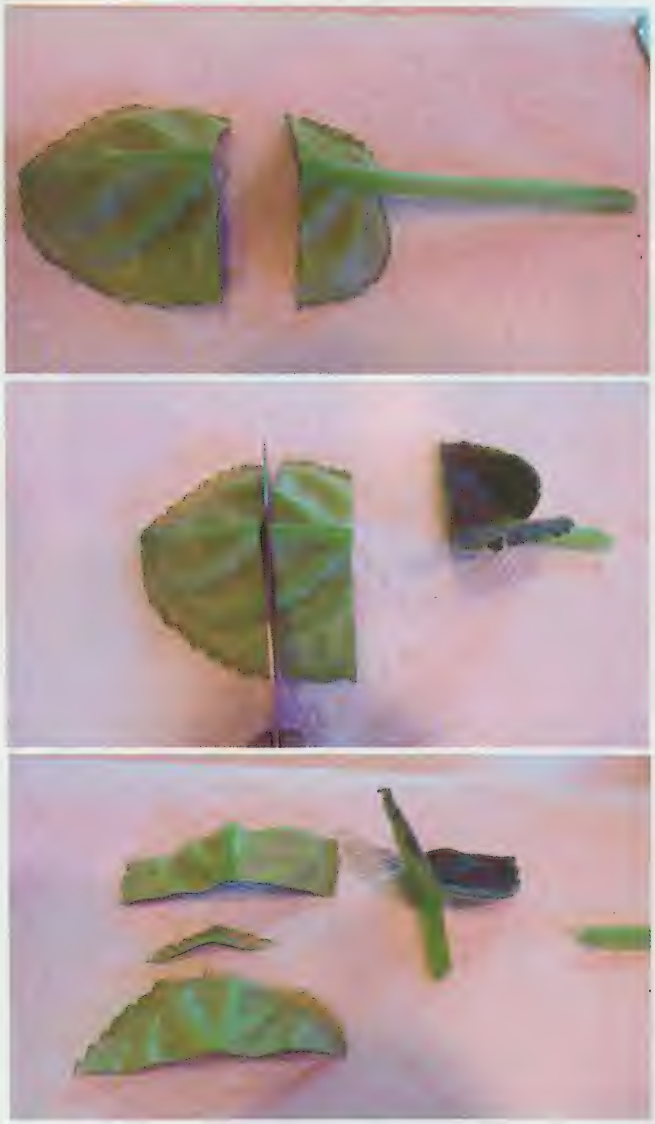


Top: These gesneriad cuttings show how roots have formed at the veins. Bottom: I used a similar procedure for this African violet leaf, with the first cut just below a set of veins, leaving enough leaf to support the stem.

When I receive gesneriad leaves, sometimes they are quite large so I've cut the top of the leaf off and put that section down like I would for an African violet leaf. Then, depending on its size, I will cut the leaf top into pieces, making sure that I have at least one vein in the leaf section. I take the cut end of the leaf piece and snuggle it into the moss. You don't want to bury the leaf piece too deeply. A plantlet will grow wherever there is a leaf vein. So you can get several sections from one leaf and get more plantlets from that leaf.

African Violet Leaf Cuts

In 2018, I was one of the winners of the *AVM* article contest and received African violet leaves from many hybridizers. Most of the leaves were huge



Top: Leaf on previous page after first cut. Center: Making second leaf cut. Bottom: Continuing to make cuts of sections with veins.

A plantlet will grow wherever there is a leaf vein.

and I normally would have cut the top of the leaf off and tossed it (this stops the leaf from continuing to grow and encourages root formation). But because these leaves were from plants that are not commonly grown here on the East Coast, I decided that I would get the most out of the leaves that I could and I followed the same procedure that I use with other gesneriad leaves by cutting them into pieces.

Top: Top piece of leaf was large enough to cut off the very tip (piece above bottom section of leaf). The middle section was wide enough to cut the sides to form a wedge piece from the center of the leaf (bottom piece). The stem end was cut at an angle and was wide, so I cut its sides off. All pieces shown ready to put in the propagation box. Bottom: Leaves in propagation box.

I put the leaf pieces cut-end down into the moss, along with the leaf section with the stem. The plantlets that formed where there was a vein were robust, even if there were multiple veins in the leaf piece. For a leaf piece that had multiple veins, I would wait for the plantlets to get big enough to have a good root system for support before I cut the leaf into sections with one plantlet per section. If you wait long enough and the plantlet is bigger, it can be separated from the leaf.

I don't know why I never thought of using this method before for starting African violets, but I'm thankful that I did because I have many more plants to share than I would have had using the usual method. Using this propagation method will give you the healthiest plantlets from a leaf, which you want if it is an uncommon plant, one for which you just paid a good price, or when propagating for your club plant sales.

Plantlets forming at the edges of veins on a Cyrtandra species plant.

AVSA Drinkware

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AVSA 75th Anniversary: 2003 Annual Convention, Baton Rouge

2003 National Convention Show Room: Horticultural and Design Exhibits. Photo by Winston Goretsky.

2003 National Convention Show Room, Baton Rouge. Photo by Winston Goretsky.

2003 National Convention Sales Room, Baton Rouge. Photo by Winston Goretsky.

Contest Entry —

Growing Trailers: A 12-Step Program

By Cristy Boothe Cordova, Tennessee

Growing trailing African violets is my passion. When I finally discovered this method, trailers started really taking off for me. Although a 12-step program usually helps someone break an addiction, this program actually leads to violet trailer addiction!

Last October, I decided to repot my Rob's Galiwinku using a modified "Japanese style" method. Members of my club had shared with me ways to do this to create a more lush and larger trailing plant that would produce a nice bloom count.

Sometimes it is better to view a process in person or through photos to see the details of each step than to have someone simply tell you how to do it. Since I am a member of several African violet groups on Facebook, I decided to take photos of each step as I carefully began to repot the trailer. Many people commented on this method and were happy to get a visual of each step.

Trailer pot sizes.

Some growers wanted to know where to get the shallow pot I used. It is simply a drip saucer that goes under standard planting containers. These can be ordered online or found at a local hardware store or garden center. Others asked about how to drill the holes for the drainage. I used an old soldering iron, but you also can use a woodburning tool or a drill since the plastic is very sturdy.

Violet growers recycle everything, so find some small condiment cups, pudding or yogurt cups and cheap plastic dessert bowls from a discount store to move your trailers up until they grow out of a 5-inch pan pot. Then, pot them up in an 8-inch drip pan. The pans come in many sizes, so if you don't have a 5-inch pan, use a 4- to 6-inch drip pan, then gradually move to a larger one.

Warning ... this 12-Step Program (pictured on the next page) will only addict you further!

Step 1. Plant is in a 5-inch pan pot, and will go into a plastic drip saucer that is about 8.5 inches in diameter and 11.5 inches deep.

Step 2. Remove large leaves.

Step 3. Put holes in saucer using a woodburning tool or soldering iron. Add two wicks made of 2-ply baby yarn.

Step 4. Add a layer of perlite and pull the wicks to the top of the perlite.

Step 5. Add soil that is mixed with 50 percent perlite and lift the wicks above the soil.

Step 6. Get ready to transplant. This trailer still is in the original pot with leaves removed.

Step 7. Check the roots for any crawlies and to make sure roots are healthy.

Step 8. Take off the bottom layer of perlite and soil, being careful not to harm roots.

Step 9. Gently set the plant in new soil, then add a bit more soil mix to fill the pot.

Step 10. Find a large container for a reservoir (I used a large cake dome).

Step 11. Set the pruned and repotted trailer atop a water reservoir. You can remove even more leaves. Don't be timid!

Step 12. In 6 to 8 weeks, you will have a beautiful plant. Here is the result for my Rob's Galiwinku.

Step 1.

Step 2.

Step 3.

Step 4.

Step 5.

Step 6.

Step 7.

Step 8.

Step 9.

Step 10.

Step 11.

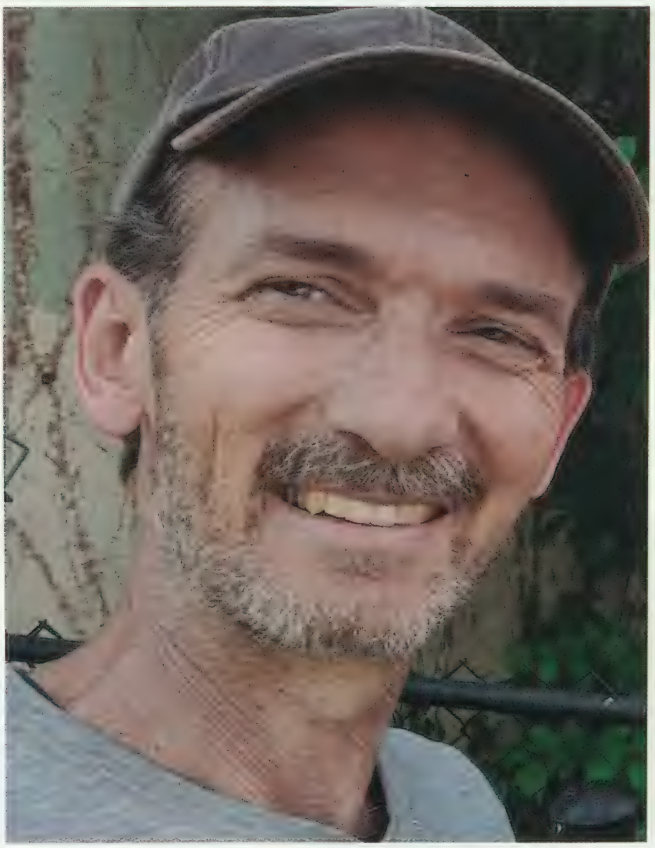
Step 12.

Contest Entry —

David Senk: African Violet Trailblazer

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

Almost anyone you meet at an African violet club meeting, convention, or in an online African violet group or forum will be familiar with the work of American hybridizer David Senk. David's unusual varieties have been the topic of energetic discussion since they first appeared on the scene in the early 2000s. A David Senk hybrid typically is characterized by longifolia leaves, exotic bloom shapes and an other-worldly quality brought about by pushing Saintpaulia DNA to previously unknown extremes. Many growers are drawn to David Senk's hybrids; and some find them strange. But everyone talks about them, all over the world. Joyce Stork, past president of the AVSA and an internationally recognized African violet author, said of David's work: "David Senk changed the AVSA."



David Senk, African violet hybridizer.

The test growers were electrified by David's new hybrids.

A Geek Gets Hooked

David Senk's African violet journey began in 1990 when his grandmother bought a few plants for him at a farmers' market. He was fascinated by the plants and began to read everything he could find to learn more about African violet history and culture. One day in 2000, David stumbled across a book with a chapter on the basics of African violet hybridization and was inspired to try making some crosses of his own. According to David, "I am an engineer — a bit of a geek anyway, so hybridizing was right down my alley."

He was particularly drawn to longifolia leaves and wasp blossoms and kept those goals in mind as he began to hybridize. For his early attempts, David chose several varieties for specific traits — among them, Reddy Trail (for its longifolia leaves and trailing growth habit), Chantaspring (for the unusual yellow blooms), and Celery (for a strongly expressed wasp gene). After several crosses and back-crosses, David had what he thought was a promising crop of successful seedlings and recruited African violet friends and clubs near and far to be his "test growers."

The results were sensational — the test growers were electrified by David's new hybrids. By 2003, David Senk's work was the topic of lively discussion among African violet enthusiasts across America and even in some places overseas. After purchasing a few starter

plants from David on eBay, I began an e-mail conversation that quickly grew into a friendship. As a result, I became one of David's test growers, and before long we were enthusiastically discussing hybridization goals and techniques.

Time to Register

As an AVSA judge and former AVSA Board member, I knew that David Senk's wonderful hybrids would not reach their full potential until they could be judged under the standard point scale in an AVSA show. This could not happen until they were registered in the AVSA Master Varieties List (AMVL). So, in 2007, I asked David if he would allow me to help with the process of registering his hybrids. To my surprise, his response was enthusiastic! Many discussions followed, in which we worked together to fine-tune descriptions. By January 2008, I sent the first 34 registrations for David Senk hybrids to the AVSA.

I would like to make it clear at this point in the story that my contributions to David's legacy were to help write descriptions for his hybrids, share ideas for names (some of which David adopted), and prepare and submit the registration forms to the AVSA. Apart from suggesting a few varieties that David might use in hybridizing to achieve some desired results, I had no hand in the planning or execution of his hybridization process.

AVSA regulations require the name of the person who registers a variety to appear alongside the hybridizer's name in cases where the hybridizer does not submit the forms. For this reason, my name appears with David Senk's in the AVSA registry. I requested several times that David send the forms to the AVSA himself to avoid this, but he insisted that my name should appear along with his. He is a kind, generous, and humble man, so I am not surprised by his decision, but I do want the record to show what my role was (and was not) in this chapter of AVSA history.

Growers Take Notice

Once the Senk hybrids were registered, their appeal to African violet growers quickly gained momentum. Within the world of growing and showing, however, change was slow to come: although the first Senk hybrids were entered in an Educational Display

> "Make something unusual, memorable and beautiful — that's the win."

section of the AVSA National Convention by 2016, it was not until the AVSA 2019 National Convention in Houston, Texas, that hybrids with unusual traits had a separately judged class of their own. This is where Senk's Anemone took top honors in its class (Best Novelty/Unusual Saintpaulia Foliage) for Sam Cunningham of Houston. Ironically, by that time, David had stopped growing and hybridizing altogether after some major life changes and an infestation of pesticide-resistant mites that completely wiped out his collection.

Senk's Anemone from David Senk. Grown by Sam Cunningham. Photo credit: Richard Craft.

By 2010, new registrations to the AVML already were listing Senk hybrids as parent plants. Varieties with Senk DNA began to appear in Russia, Ukraine, Sweden, Japan and other countries across the globe, and still are appearing today. In many cases, these new hybrids are even more interesting and unusual than their Senk ancestors.

In an interview for this article, I asked David how he feels about this. He said, "I am jazzed about that. That's how we live on!" I also asked him for his

assessment of the new generation of Russian and Ukrainian hybrids that build upon his work. He said, "Man, they knock my socks off!" When I asked him to name his favorite Russian or Ukrainian African violet hybrid, he did not hesitate for a moment before naming LE-Erika, from Ukrainian hybridizer Elena Lebetskaia.

Private but Persistent

David Senk is an intensely private man (although he will readily "talk violets") who diligently avoids the spotlight but loves to see his hybrids grown and enjoyed. He recently began hybridizing again and has asked me, as before, to be a test grower and to help him register his new hybrids when the time comes. I agreed, of course — I consider our friendship to be a great honor. In our last phone conversation, I told him that he has inspired me to take up hybridizing again. We discussed our ages (he is 58; I am 60) and he joked that we only have about 40 years left to pursue our goals! This type of humor is typical of his warm and witty nature.

David's hybridization goals are the same today as they were when he began hybridizing 20 years ago; he would like to produce a true yellow wasp bloom with longifolia leaves. He lists Chantaspring as a desirable parent for yellow coloration, primarily because the color is consistently true and uniform, and the pollen easier to obtain than some other yellow varieties, which give up pollen reluctantly (if at all). In all these years, he has never lost his passion for hybridizing or lost sight of his dream. The hybridization process, he says, is addictive: "The first time you get a seed pod to set and seedlings to grow, you're hooked!"

Asking a hybridizer to choose a favorite African violet from his own hybrids is a bit like asking a parent to choose a favorite child, but as it turns out, David is partial to one in particular: Anemone, known for its wildly corkscrewed "Shrek ear" foliage and oddly contorted blue/purple wasp blossoms. At the end of our recent interview, I asked David if he had any advice to offer future hybridizers. His reply reflects his dedication to the art: "Create something *new*. The uniform, round violet has been out there for so long! Make something unusual, memorable and beautiful — that's the win. Go off the trail!"

... he has never lost his passion for hybridizing or lost sight of his dream.

David Senk's amazing work has helped change the world's idea of what an African violet can be. He would most certainly be astounded to learn that some call him a genius, but it is an apt moniker. The effects of his pioneering vision will ripple across oceans and continents, delighting, astonishing, and inspiring African violet enthusiasts for generations to come.

Senk's Fruit Fly. Hybridized by: R. Follett/D. Senk. Exhibited by: Wilhelmina Allen, Houston 2019. Photo credit: AVSA Library Committee.

Coming Events

Fall African violet shows and sales still might be cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus. This list represents those shows still scheduled on our website as of July 29. Be sure to check the AVSA website Events page (www.avsa.com/events), search the local club on Facebook, or contact the organizers below for the latest information.

September 12 — Georgia
African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta
Show and Plant Sale
North Decatur Methodist Church
1523 Church Street
Decatur, GA
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Sue Myers: 630-319-3155
avclubofga@gmail.com

October 3 — Michigan
Michigan State African Violet Society
Display and Sale
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
800 N. Dixboro Rd
Ann Arbor, MI
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Lynn Allen: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

October 3 — Texas
Spring Branch African Violet Club
Plant Sale
Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Teresa Kaminski: tckaminski@sbcglobal.net

November 7 — Oregon
Portland African Violet Association
Education/displays/sales
Portland Nursery
9000 SE Division
Portland, OR
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Alice Wagner: 503-631-3925
alicemaeblue@yahoo.com

BLOOMLALA
Adorn Yourself in Violets
Beautiful clothing items featuring African violets from Bloomlala!
Use code JOY when you order online and AVSA receives a portion of the proceeds.
bloomlala.com/collections/violet

Family Portrait: *Streptocarpella* 'Blueberry Creme'

By Paul Kroll

5953 Broadway, No. 128 • Lancaster, NY 14086
Email: pfkroll@me.com

There has been a discussion going on recently among the gesneriad growers regarding the plant I have chosen for this Family Portrait column. I thought it particularly appropriate to select this plant because of its name controversy over the years. This *Streptocarpus* subgenus *Streptocarpella* 'Blueberry Creme' has been seen in many shows over the years, but was called *Streptocarpella* 'Blueberries 'n' Cream'.

Clarifying the Name

After researching the name, it was discovered that there were two plants carrying the same name! Jonathan Ford had hybridized and named a *Streptocarpus* 'Blueberries 'n' Cream' that is acaulescent (having no stem)/rosulate (rosette shaped) and has solid green foliage.

Streptocarpus subgenus *Streptocarpella* 'Blueberry Creme'.

The plant I am discussing in this article was hybridized and registered by Patrick Worley. This plant is caulescent (stemmed) and shows coloration of white and/or yellow on its foliage. Although not technically "variegated," the plant's foliage looks like it has variegation. Please note the proper name of *Streptocarpus* subgenus *Streptocarpella* 'Blueberry Creme' and change your labels!

> ... there were two plants carrying the same name!

Growing Blueberry Creme

I have grown this plant for many years. Its brightly colored foliage is an immediate attraction and the blooms, carried high above the foliage, also are most alluring. The caulescent growth is stemmed, unlike the streptocarpus plants that are so popular today, which are rosulate in growth habit.

Streptocarpella plants often can be found in nursery catalogs and stores, usually as hanging basket plants. They do well in that situation. I grow mine in a shallow bowl. One of my pot alternatives is a snack bowl from the dollar store with holes drilled into the bottom for drainage. Remember, gesneriads (and African violet trailers) may be exhibited in any pot in which they grow.

I take cuttings from the plant and put them down in the bowl, filling the surface with several cuttings so that the plant has a full appearance quickly. I put the pot of cuttings into a plastic baggie and allow them to root. Gradual weaning from the bag produces a nice-looking plant. Not long after the cuttings have rooted, they will begin to bloom freely.

The variegated-appearing foliage is so attractive that I often use a rooted tip cutting in a container garden

planting as well. The leaves add texture and color variation to the plantings.

With regular potting mix and weekly diluted fertilization, the plant thrives. I have recently grown it at the edge of a shelf with four T-8 bulbs above. It will grow easily and well under two tubes, which I have done for years. Some growers believe that the foliage will go completely pale green when grown cool, but I have never experienced that in all the years I have grown this *Streptocarpus*.

When the plant begins to look ratty, I take cuttings and start it over! This is an easy plant to get to bloom,

> I often use a rooted tip cutting in a container garden planting.

and it always looks happy and supplies lots of cheery blooms. Try it if you don't already have it, and if you do have it, please change your label to reflect the proper name.

"Perfectly Pittman" Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.

Jolly Orchid

Available in the AVSA Store. DVD and Thumbdrive format $20

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Johnny Angel

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by: P. Sorono
From Best AVSA
Standard Collection
AVSA 2019 Convention, Houston
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

***Streptocarpus* 'Canterbury Surprise'**

Exhibited by: Sherrie Zimmerman
AVSA 2019 Convention, Houston

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Windy Day

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: K. Stork/G. Boone
AVSA Honor Roll, 2001
Large Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Baby Brian

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: P. Tracey
Best in Show in 2003 for
Dr. Bill Price
Semiminiature Trailer

Shows and Judges Column

By Mary Corondan, Chair Email: judges@avsa.org

It was thrilling to have such a beautiful Virtual Violets Convention amid the pandemic when we were unable to gather. Many thanks to all of you who participated by entering exhibits. Viewing the lovely plants was a welcome distraction from the world situation.

New Master Judges

Congratulations to those becoming Master Judges in October 2020. They are Kathryn Hedgepeth, Virginia; Barbara Pershing, Iowa; and William Schmidt, Virginia.

Add Your Email Address

The Shows and Judges Committee and the Executive Committee have approved listing the email addresses of judges in the "members only" section of the website provided the AVSA judge has granted permission for us to include it there. If you would like your email address added to the AVSA Judges' List on the website, please email me at judges@avsa.org. Unless you request it, your email address will not be added.

Approved Items

The following items have been approved:

1. The SSA packet will be placed on the Shows and Judges' website page as a printable packet for use by affiliates with approved show schedules. This will include the AVSA Collection Score Sheets, Tally Time form, Show Critique Sheet, AVSA Standard Show Award point score sheet and the "And the winners are..." form. Blue/green cards and rosettes will still be mailed. This will save on postage and make forms readily available to affiliates.
2. If a show has more than 50 percent other gesneriads, the judges still can count the judging of the show toward their judging certification.
3. The price for international registration of violets has been reduced from $25 to $10. This should encourage more violet registrations from other countries.

The SSA packet will be placed on the Shows and Judges' website page as a printable packet ...

Handbook Revisions

Below are the revisions that were approved for the 2016 *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. The added language is listed in bold and underlined. These will go into effect on November 15, 2020.

1. On page 52, revise under Condition, Points, to state: Points: deduct 1/2 point **for each** spent blossom **and up to 1/2 point each for limp, damaged, marred, discolored, or faded blossom.**
2. On page 79, the last paragraph, change the September/October 2018 revision to read: "Two thirds of the total exhibits must be in horticulture division(s) or the show will not be judged. To be considered for the AVSA Standard Show Awards, **over 50%** of the horticulture division(s) must be comprised of African violets." (Note: Blue ribbons received by exhibitors in shows not considered for AVSA Standard Show Award **will** still count toward judging certification.) A signed show schedule **will** count toward shows judged for **senior** judging certification.
3. On page 88, under Judging School Procedures for Teachers, delete what is currently listed under 4., and replace with the following:

4. Each examination shall consist of 100 points: 90 points for a written exam and 10 points for

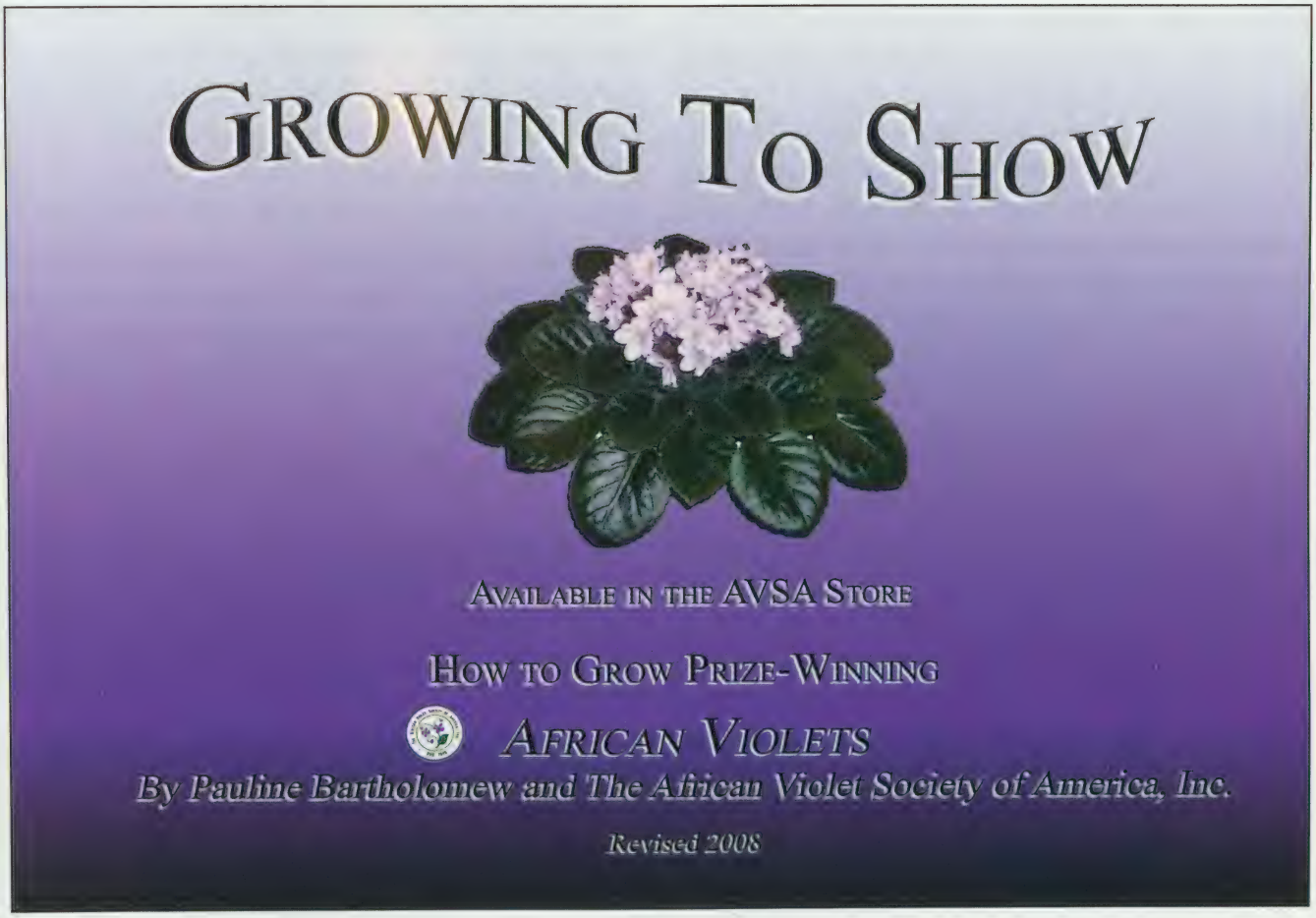
point scoring two African violet specimen plants. The exam can be split into sections, which may facilitate grading. The final section of the test shall consist of the point scoring of two African violet specimen plants. The judging of each plant will be worth five points: three points are allotted for the point score judging of each plant and two points for the comments supporting each point score. Official AVSA point score sheets shall be used for this portion scoring.

a. The entire 100-point exam may be given in the classroom setting. OR

b. The written portion may be split into two parts: Part 1 consisting of 50 points as an open book test to be completed at home and brought to class. Part 2 consisting of 40 points to be completed in the classroom setting.

c. In all cases, the point scoring of the two African violets shall be in the classroom setting.

Stay happy, healthy, and safe during these difficult times. Growing plants can be a rewarding endeavor. They will enjoy the extra attention.


GROWING TO SHOW
AVAILABLE IN THE AVSA STORE
HOW TO GROW PRIZE-WINNING
AFRICAN VIOLETS
By Pauline Bartholomew and The African Violet Society of America, Inc.
Revised 2008

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

Indiana Academy, Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

In the first issue of the *African Violet Magazine* for 2020, I hinted that there might be an announcement about a possible new type of leaf variegation. I hope everyone saw the article on cosmic variegation shown by Cosmic Fairy in the July/August issue of the *AVM*. This was the plant I was hinting about. The evidence as of this writing seems to support that the foliage dots of cosmic variegation are not caused by a virus. We know that the trait can be transmitted through leaf cuttings. I'm sure that hybridization experiments currently are underway to determine if and how the trait can be transmitted through sexual reproduction.

Since most variegated leaf traits are transmitted maternally through the cytoplasm, I would suggest using Cosmic Fairy as the seed parent. However, I hope some hybridizers try reciprocal crosses using Cosmic Fairy as the pollen parent to see if the trait might be due to a gene in the nucleus and can be transmitted by both parents. An inheritance pattern of leaf variegation through both parents is rare but is known in other plant species. Time will tell if this type of leaf variegation catches on and more cultivars are developed with the trait.

Q: Why are the stamen and anther numbers variable in African violets?

A: African violets belong to the dicot group of plants. In addition to having two cotyledons, or seed leaves, the flowers of this group usually have floral parts in multiples of fours or fives. The Gesneriaceae, the plant family to which African violets belong, usually have five sepals, five petals, two to five stamens and one pistil. Stamen number in African violets is strongly linked to flower shape. Pansy-shaped flowers have two stamens (the other three are repressed) and star-shaped flowers have five stamens. Star-shaped flowers with six petals often have six stamens. As you can see, petal number and stamen number link together strongly. However, many mutations in floral parts exist.

Time will tell if this type of leaf variegation catches on.

For example, the floral parts all can covert to sepals. The resulting flowers look like miniature cabbages and never open. Being green, the flowers last for a long time. Optimara NeverFloris is an example of this mutation. In double-petaled African violet flowers, the stamens are converted to petals. These plants are male sterile because they produce no stamens, anthers or pollen. There are also examples in which all the floral parts convert to pistils. Flowers of this mutation look like pincushions with all the pistils pointing up at various angles. Flowers also can have multiple layers of stamens. When these are converted to petals, the result is triple-petaled flowers. A list of all the flower part mutations possible in African violets would likely take a full page.

Q: Do the mutations in flower parts affect their fertility?

A: It depends on the mutation, but the answer often is "yes." Stamens convert easily to petals, making the flower male sterile. In some cases, the pistil also converts to a petal and the flower has no functioning sexual parts. Semidouble flowers may or may not have functional stamens. Interestingly, lowering the fertilizer to semidouble flower plants can shift the expression of the stamens from petals back to stamens and restore their fertility. Starving the plant for nutrients seems to restore sexual reproduction.

In a few cases, the stamens develop partly into petals. When they do, the pollen sacs or anther generally remain undeveloped and the plant is male sterile. A recently developed series from Optimara, the Optimara Looxo plants, have no stamens. These plants are male sterile, but they also do not attract thrips. This mutation may be similar to sunflowers that don't produce pollen. So, the final answer — mutate the flowers, and the plant often loses the ability to reproduce sexually.

Q: Now that summer is here, why are some of my flowers changing color?

A: African violet pigments can be sensitive to temperature. During summer, when conditions in the Northern Hemisphere are warmer, the flowers might produce less pigment and become lighter in color compared to flowers on the same plant produced under cooler growing conditions. The thumbprint mutation in flowers is notorious for changing expression under different temperatures. Under cooler conditions, flowers commonly display more white areas and less pigmented areas. Less white areas and more pigmented areas often are seen under warmer growing conditions. In a few instances, the flower color can shift from red to more of a red violet as more blue pigment is produced under cooler growing conditions. I've also seen a few cases where flowers are totally white under warm conditions but show pink or pink markings under very cool conditions.

The underlying reason for these color variations is a change in either the gene expression or a change in the ability of the pigment making enzymes to function under different temperatures. The result is a change in the amount of pigment production and a subsequent change in the apparent color of the flower. The only treatment for these situations is to tightly control the temperature of growing conditions. If the temperature, especially the nighttime temperature, stays constant, the amount of pigment produced should stay the same and the flower color won't change.

Q: I like flowers that have paler color on the back of the petals. Do you know how this trait is inherited?

A: I have not seen any data on crosses for this trait, so I don't know for sure how it is inherited. However, the trait is uncommon. It only seems to be found in a few plants like Picasso. Given how rare the trait seems to be, I would speculate that it might be inherited as a recessive trait. Dominant traits, like thumbprint flowers, tend to reproduce easily and become "common" in the African violet trade.

Q: How can I breed to increase the size of the flowers on African violets?

A: The simplest way to increase flower size is to breed plants with large flowers with others that have large flowers. Some of the offspring likely will display slightly larger flowers than either parent. However, selection for size can go only so far. The amount of energy it takes to produce large flowers usually is limited and will be drawn from some other part of the plant. Frequently, the number of flowers on the bloom stalk decreases to provide the energy for larger flowers.

Your choice is to have a small number of large flowers on the bloom stalk, or a larger number of smaller flowers. It's difficult because of energy demands to produce both large size and large number together. Even when you get both traits together, the plant often must take energy from other parts, resulting in smaller leaves and decreased plant size. African violets have only so much energy available to them. If you spend it in one location, the price often is a decrease in size and vigor in another.

Q: Why do some fantasy plants produce flowers that are solid color on one side and fantasy marked on the other? Sometimes the flowers split colors and are blue on one side and pink on the other with no fantasy markings at all.

A: Fantasy is a very unstable trait because it is caused by pieces of DNA moving in and out of position. When the position of the DNA changes, the expression of traits changes. During flower development, the DNA can be completely lost in one group of progenitor cells that are making up a flower. Once the trait is gone, the expression of the fantasy marks also is gone. The result is a section of the flower with solid colors and no fantasy marks. Sometimes the lost piece of DNA is in the genes that control flower color. This results in sections that are blue while other sections are pink. Sometimes I think the only "stable" thing about fantasy is that it will be "unstable."

AVSA Affiliate Update

By Jeri Anderson, Affiliate Chair

Email: affiliate@avsa.org

These have been the most unusual few months. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly put a stop to everything. So many events had to be cancelled. Some clubs notified me about their event being cancelled, but the event was not in the event listing. What had happened is that their show schedule had been sent in for approval, but no one sent in their event information. So, remember to submit your event (avsa.org/events) after getting your show schedule approved if you want it to be posted on the AVSA website.

Virtual Convention

Even if you didn't participate in the 2020 Virtual Violet Convention, I really hope you took the time to visit the convention online. It's amazing just how much work got done to provide an entire convention online. There were plant and design entries, new introduction pictures of all the beautiful new hybrids, four full presentations, selfie pictures of AVSA members, and even a convention pin to purchase. The commercial page had links to all our wonderful vendors' websites. Of course, there also was the invitation to our 75th convention to be held in Atlanta.

Club Updates

The Local Clubs area of the AVSA website is almost up to date. If your club is one of those without an update date, please take the time to do a club update via the AVSA website. Just click on "Local Clubs" and you will see the area for the Local Club Update. It only takes a few minutes and is most helpful for people looking for an African violet club in their area.

Fall Check-in

September is the time of year when clubs resume their regular meetings after the summer break. Take the time to follow up on any members who do not come back in the fall. Did they lose interest in your club and move on to something else? Or, is there something about your club that they do not like? Sometimes, all it takes is a personal call to help members feel wanted.

> Remember to submit your event after getting your show schedule approved.

New Clubs

The Upstate African Violet Club of South Carolina has become an AVSA affiliate. Welcome!

We have a list of members working to start a club:

- Laura Carpenter: Lancaster, CA;
Phone: 661-940-3990
- Mary Ann Markey: Port Charlotte, FL;
Email: drmaogrady@gmail.com
- Jennie Lawrence: Laramie, WY;
Email: missjennae@yahoo.com
- Rebecca Klase: Greensboro, NC;
Email: rklase@gmail.com

Hopefully, someone will be interested in joining a club in one of these areas. There are several states that do not have even one African violet club. If you live in one of these states, please consider starting a local club. If you are trying to start a new club in your area, please contact the Affiliate Chair for help.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Frozen in Time

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano
Honor Roll, 2004
Standard

Necessity: The Mother of Invention

By Paul Kroll Lancaster, New York

The cancellation of shows and conventions this year has created a problem for many of us who propagate plants for the sales tables. I had so many starter plants to donate to those sales and no way to get them moved on to new homes! They began to outgrow the trays and Solo cups I had used. What to do?

Letting Friends Know

I typed up a list of plants I had available and sent it out to a few friends to see if there was anything on the list that they wanted. I got a few replies and then came the next problem: How do I ship these plants? I didn't have the materials needed to wrap each Solo cup so that the soil would not spill and mess up the plant itself. In all honesty, I did not want to spend the time, energy and resources to do all of that. I wracked my brain to think of an easier way to pack and ship the promised plants.

In thinking about being on the receiving end of such a package, I became aware of the first thing I would do: Repot the plants in my own soil! I realized that was what anyone who received a new plant would do, since each of us has our own recipe and reasons for the soil mix we use or make ourselves. My starter plants were all in my rooting medium and needed fresh, real soil to move on and grow correctly. I do not wick water any of my plants, but many growers do, so there was another facet to the problem of receiving such a shipment.

Secure Packing Method

I came up with the idea of removing each plant from its Solo cup and putting it into a plastic baggie of proper size. I positioned the root ball at the bottom corner. Then, I gathered the baggie around the root ball and used a number 16 rubber band to secure the root ball, therefore isolating the root ball from the plant above. This seemed to contain the soil and its possible mess from coming free and getting all over the plant.

Top: A starter plant inside a baggie ready to secure with a rubber band. Bottom: The rubber band holds the baggie in place around the soil of the root ball for easy shipping.

When the baggie was sealed with some air inside, the plant was "cushioned" and secured from bumping and bruising by the baggie packaging. I used crushed

paper and/or shredded paper to further pack and cushion the baggies and their precious cargo within each box.

I am very pleased to report that each package arrived easily and the plants were said to be in excellent condition! All the recipients of the plants and cuttings I sent packed in this manner were happy with the results. Each one told me that the plants arrived in good shape and that they were easily potted into whatever mix and method the recipient uses. The leaf cuttings also were fine, with no tissue, Kleenex, cotton balls, etc., necessary. If you cut leaves from turgid plants, the leaves will survive best if you give them no extra moisture at all. Just pack them in their baggies and send them on!

> When the baggie was sealed with some air inside, the plant was "cushioned."

My idea worked and it was so easy to do. I can only hope that this packing method may work for others to make shipping less of a chore and bring happiness to the recipient.

Support AVSA when you shop!

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Did you know that Amazon has a program for shoppers to designate a charity of their choice, and Amazon will contribute a portion of every dollar you spend? Here's an easy way to support the African Violet Society of America at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU!

Just go to smile.amazon.com and follow the directions. Select African Violet Society of America as your organization to support.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Tips and Techniques: Recycle

African violet growers become masters at reusing, repurposing and recycling. We love seeing ideas on materials, tools and tricks you use.

This month's tip comes from Dale Martens: Recycle plastic food containers to provide either isolation to quarantine new plants or to add extra humidity for cuttings or newly potted plants. Wash the containers thoroughly after enjoying your tasty treat. Small condiment containers can be used for seed sowing.

If you have a quick tip or technique, share it with fellow growers. Send your tips and photos, if you have them, to the editor (editor@avsa.org).

Dale's McDonald's containers repurposed for growing, plus one "before" photo …

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from April 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020 Total: $60

Two-tone — $25-$49
Susan E. Joy, Pickerington, OH

Thumbprint — Under $25
Barbara Kirby, St. John, IN
Robert McMeel, Houma, LA

Thumbprint (Continued)
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA
Lynn Wallach, Hollywood, FL

Photo Credit: Richard Craft

Chrysothemis pulchella

Exhibited by: Robbie McMeel
Best Other Gesneriad, 2019
AVSA Convention

Photo Credit: Richard Craft

Milky Way Trail

Exhibited by: Dolores Gibbs
Hybridized by: J. Stahl
Best Trailer in Unusual Container,
2019 AVSA Convention
Semiminiature Trailer

Contest Entry —

Keeping Track of Your Collection

By Amy Cash-Allison Somonauk, Illinois

Before technology made things easier, and I had just a handful of plants, it was a piece of cake remembering all the plants' names, habits and what kind of music they liked. But violets are like potato chips (or rabbits?), and it didn't take long before I had a true addiction. That's when I realized I wanted and needed some kind of organizational system.

I wanted to keep track of when and where I acquired each plant or leaf, and I wanted a multitude of information at my fingertips as I tended the plants. For example, I didn't want to buy from the "mealybug place" again or accidentally overfertilize that delicate one in the back for the third time, whatever its name was. I needed a database on steroids!

Early Record Keeping

In those early days, all I needed was a notebook. Soon I began running out of room and making a mess of it. And, perhaps worst of all was that I couldn't maintain "order," especially the alphabetical kind (gasp!) So, my next brilliant idea was an index card file. For keeping track of all the basics, such as when and where I acquire a plant, what phase I currently have (leaf or plant) and repotting date, this is a good method. Each card can be shuffled, added to, removed easily, etc. An added tip: you also can keep precut description labels in the card file so that when you next repot, the label is ready to go.

However, I didn't care for writing a lot of text on small cards, and I record a lot of information. I needed to elaborate. I needed to extoll the virtues of each special plant. A 3-by-5 card just didn't do it.

So then came "The Binder," which is a great idea for record keeping for growers who prefer something tangible but not technological. This method provided endless room for notes, the ability to add or remove pages as needed, and room for me to write notes on each plant to my heart's content.

I finally turned to my computer and designed my own inventory list in Excel.

Technology Tools

Eventually my collection grew too large to keep such detailed notes, so I finally turned to my computer and designed my own inventory list in Excel. In landscape format, I list my cultivars alphabetically (of course) in rows and have created several columns for all sorts of information that I have found very useful! I abbreviate when possible and squeeze all the columns together to keep this all on one page. These are the columns that I use:

1. Cultivar name
2. Cultivar's registered/described size
3. Source: When and where did I obtain it?
4. No. of plants I have
5. No. of babies I have
6. No. of set leaves I have
7. Last repotting date
8. Is it blooming true?
9. Growing comments (I keep them brief here)
10. Placement on my shelves (I have a stand/shelf numbering system)
11. Is this cultivar registered? (Helpful because I show)

I print and keep this spreadsheet in my growing area, and I refer to it all the time. While it might seem like overkill to some, it worked well for me when I was growing more than 300 plants on four stands. It still works great for all the basics, as well as keeping track of crosses and seedlings. I still keep a First Class list with all the descriptions of the cultivars I grow, so I can be sure they are growing and blooming appropriately.

I've found that any type of record keeping system is better than none, because it can save you all sorts of headaches later. Certainly, give it a try and have all your plant info at your fingertips!

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received in May and June 2020 Total: $1,680

Chimera — $1,000
Anne Nicholas
In honor and memory of Richard Nicholas

Geneva — $100-$499
Anne Nicholas
In memory of Bill Foster
Anne Nicholas
In memory of Tom Savage

Multicolor — $50-$99
Margery I. Clive
Anne Nicholas
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Anne Nicholas
In memory of Judy Millstone
Anne Nicholas
In memory of Edna Rourke

Two-tone — $25-$49
Karyn Cichocki
In honor of Dr. Jeff Smith
Cross Town AVC
Alice A. Inlow

Two-tone (continued)
Sue Ramser
In memory of Nancy Carr
Sue Ramser
In memory of Mary Corondan's sister-in-law, Bonnie
Sue Ramser
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Sue Ramser
In memory of Shirley Berger
Sue Ramser
In memory of Art Boland
Cathy Willis
In memory of Nancy Carr

Thumbprint — Under $25
Karen Boswell
Florence Fazekas
Dawn McCollum
Patricia Miklica
John L. Patterson

Contest Entry —

An Interview with a Show-Winning Violet

By Susan Shaw Loveland, Colorado

Hi. My name is Picasso and I just won Best Standard at the Rocky Mountain African Violet Council show. I am so proud of myself and the other gesneriads my plant mom grows. I would like to share some secrets that my mom has taught me.

Early Life

I remember when I started from a leaf. My plant mom snapped my petiole, leaving about 1.5 inches so that more cells would put out roots. She then placed me in a Solo cup after dipping my stem in cinnamon. She makes the soil herself using peat moss, perlite and vermiculite, with some dolomite lime to bring my home's pH up to 6.7.

To this, she adds mycorrhizae and dry molasses. The dry molasses feeds the mycorrhizae. When filling the cup, she puts in a soaking-wet wick cut from acrylic yarn. Then she puts in about three-quarters of an inch of damp perlite. The perlite in the soil prevents my soil from drowning me. Next goes a layer of soil, and then one-fourth teaspoon of Marathon and a few pieces of horticultural charcoal. She lowers me into the pot and scoops in the soil to cover my roots. It feels so good to stretch and put up babies.

Growing Up

Then I am placed on a tray with egg crating covered with green felt to hide the algae. My mom has a 15-gallon trash can with a sump pump in the bottom that she fills with fertilized water. For fertilizer, she uses one-fourth teaspoon of either Peter's 12-36-14, Plant Marvel 12-31-14, Dyna-Gro 7-9-5, or Dyna-Gro Foliage Pro 9-3-6, plus a drop of Superthrive. Once a week, she gives all of us a foliar feed with Foliage Pro 9-3-6. She puts one-eighth teaspoon of the fertilizer in a quart spray bottle. She has a soft hose and a wand to feed me and give me a drink.

Overhead are bright lights. My plant mom uses T12 or T8 fluorescent, or T8 LED lights for 12 hours a day. I love to bask in the bright lights. She also runs a fan near us 24 hours a day so we have plenty of air flow.

To this, she adds mycorrhizae and dry molasses.

Getting Ready to Go

I put up many babies, but my mom keeps only two of them. One is for show and one is to sell at our club sales or to give away. When the baby is ready to be potted up into its own pot and blooms, my mom watches to make sure it is true, or that it looks identical to its mother plant and fits the description in First Class. She then keeps disbudding until nine weeks before show, about the time I decide that I am ready to go.

My sister plants — the species — need dolomite lime in the bottom of their pots because they grow on lime rocks in nature. So, she puts one teaspoon of lime on the top of the bottom layer of their soil.

During the time she is waiting for the show, Plant Mom attends The Loveland Sweetheart Violettes Society in Loveland, Colorado. She founded the club in 1975 and is the president. She says it is a privilege to share growing tips and plant material with club members. When Mom comes home, she tells me about all she has learned. Of course, she isolates the new plants and leaves in plastic bags or plastic containers for three months to help keep me safe.

Every so often, my plant mom gives me a shower with lukewarm water to clean my leaves. She makes sure she doesn't get water in my crown. If she does, she rolls a small piece of paper towel up and dabs my crown to absorb the water. Mom puts us on the floor to see which leaves she needs to remove. If we have developed a neck, she scrapes it and removes some of the bottom roots. It feels so good to stretch and put out new roots and leaves.

At two weeks and six weeks before show, our mom uses Peters 5-50-17 fertilizer because it has a high middle number, which helps our roots and blooms. I love that my roots are stimulated to put up more blooms. Some of us that are the prettiest and most symmetrical, and have a large bloom count, go in Oyama Pots. During the waiting time mom puts in some orders with Commercial AVSA members. It is so exciting when we get new brothers and sisters. Of course, they have to be isolated from us.

After the Show

When arriving home from the show, Mom sprays us with one-half teaspoon of Conserve SC, one-half teaspoon of Avid, one-half teaspoon of neem oil and one-half teaspoon of Safer Brand insecticidal soap. She puts the mix in a gallon of hot water and sprays us once a week for three weeks. I love how she helps prevent pests to keep us healthy.

> The perlite in the soil prevents my soil from drowning me.

The best part is the success! Some of us won Best in Class, and some of us got special rosettes for Best in Section. But better yet, we won the Horticulture Sweepstakes!

Our proud plant mom with me (Picasso) and her show awards.

Building Maintenance Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from April 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020 Total: $165

Multicolor — $50-$99
John Novak, St. Michaels, MD

Two-tone — $25-$49
Joan Wilson, Theresa, WI

Thumbprint — Under $25
Ralph Olliges, Jr., St. Louis, MO
Suzanne E. Rasich, Plano, IL
Ann Schmit, Running Springs, CA
Elizabeth Tan, Skillman, NJ

Celebrating 75 Years

African Violet Society of America

Atlanta

2021

75 YEARS

Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland St. NE | Atlanta, GA 30303

Sunday, May 30, 2021 ~ Sunday, June 6, 2021

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021
Show and Salesroom open to the public
9am to 5pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2021
Show | 9am to 4pm
Salesroom | 9am to 3pm

Hosted by: The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta

The African Violet Society of America, Inc. ORG. 1946

Visit avsa.org
for more info.

2021 Annual Convention: Celebrate AVSA's 75th Year in Atlanta!

By Kathy Spissman Tucker, Georgia

As the African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta continues to prepare for the celebration in our capital city of Atlanta, Georgia, March 30 through June 6, 2021, we want to let you know about Atlanta's many fun and interesting venues to visit; we are considering some of the venues below for tours.

The Atlanta Botanical Garden

Renowned plant collections, beautiful displays, and spectacular exhibitions make the Atlanta Botanical Garden the loveliest place in town to visit. The Garden, located in Midtown, includes 30 acres of outdoor gardens, a one-of-a-kind Canopy Walk through Storza Woods, and an innovative edible garden featuring an outdoor demonstration kitchen.

The Fuqua Conservatory is an organic biosphere and home to important collections of tropical palms and conifers; the Fuqua Orchid Center is home to a stunning collection of species orchids. Visit: https://atlantabg.org/

The Fuqua Orchid Center is home to a stunning collection of species orchids.

The World of Coca Cola

At the World of Coca-Cola, experience the fascinating story of the world's most famous beverage brand in a dynamic, multimedia attraction. Get a behind-the-scenes look at the bottling process and view more than 1,200 artifacts ranging from vintage bottles to a 1939 Coca-Cola delivery truck from Argentina. Experience the thrilling 4-D movie, "In Search of the Secret Formula" with 3-D glasses plus moving seats.

Take your taste buds on a trip around the world and sample more than 100 different beverages made by The Coca-Cola Company from around the world in the Taste It! beverage lounge. And don't miss the chance to hug and have your picture taken with the very friendly 7-foot-tall Coca-Cola Polar Bear! The World of Coca-Cola is located at 121 Baker Street in Pemberton Place, adjacent to the Georgia Aquarium. Visit: https://www.worldofcoca-cola.com/

The King Center

Learn more about Dr. Martin Luther King and his work through timeless exhibits on display at Freedom Hall and around the King Center campus. The Grand Foyer features art from Africa and Georgia and

Fountain with Chilhuly glass at Atlanta Botanical Garden. Image by Gene Phillips and courtesy of ACVB.

Freedom Hall's second floor is used as exhibit space to honor Dr. and Mrs. King, Mahatma Gandhi and Rosa Parks.

Also visit the center's reflecting pool and eternal flame, along with the King Center's library and archives. Visit: www.thekingcenter.org

The Yellow Fish Tunnel at the Georgia Aquarium. Image by Kevin C. Rose and courtesy of ACVB.

The Georgia Aquarium

Georgia Aquarium offers shows, interactive animal experiences, animal encounters, and a 4-D theater. See sea lions at SunTrust Pier 225, then head to the AT&T Dolphin Coast to learn about dolphin behavior and the human connection.

Georgia Aquarium is dedicated to enhancing conservation and preservation of animals, and help makes a positive impact on aquatic life in Atlanta and around the world. Visit: www.georgiaaquarium.org

Stone Mountain Park

Spread across 3,200 beautiful acres, Stone Mountain Park is Georgia's most-visited attraction — and with good reason. The fun and family activities reign during every season at Stone Mountain Park. The park is built around the world's largest piece of exposed granite (that'd be Stone Mountain). Stone Mountain Park offers hiking trails, picnic spots, and two golf courses. Visit: www.stonemountainpark.com/

With all these and many more places to visit, "Mark Your Calendar" now to attend.

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from April 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020 Total: $120

Multicolor — $50-$99
Randy McMahill, Ankeny, IA

Two-tone — $25-$49
Alice A. Inlow, Ballwin, MO

Thumbprint — Under $25
Leslie Breen, Houston, TX
Robert McMeel, Houma, LA
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA
Maria Den Oudsten, Calgary, Canada

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rainbow's Quiet Riot

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Wasmund
Best in Show for Tony Hulleman, 2002; Honor Roll 2003
Standard

A Retrospect from AVSA Past Presidents

By Carolee Carter, Chair, Publications Committee

The first 50 years of AVSA's existence after the Society was formed in Atlanta in 1946 were commemorated in a special publication for AVSA's 50th anniversary in 1996. AVSA has changed a lot in the past 25 years, and I thought that the best insight into these years would be a view from some of our past presidents.

Not all past presidents were able to participate, but for those who did, their responses are eye-opening and perhaps coincide with what you also believe about AVSA's transition into the digital — and hopefully virus-free — world! Let's listen to what they have to say.

Mary Boland

I was so happy to receive a short but sweet response from Mary Boland, who was president from 1989 to 1991. She joined AVSA in 1959 when she found a small ad in *The Flower Grower* magazine. The annual subscription was $3 a year for 4 issues, and she couldn't wait for the next issue. "The magazines were all in black and white, unlike the beautiful issues we now get," she says.

"Not only did I fall in love with the African violet, but I worked with some of the top stars — Ruth Carey, Anne and Frankie Tinari, Lyndon Lyon and many of the older hybridizers — and I gained so many friends. I guess you realize that because I am now 93, I have been unable to go to convention and boy, do I miss that."

And we miss you, Mary!

> "It's been exciting to watch the energy of the volunteers and staff ..."

Janet Riemer

Janet Riemer, our current AVSA Archivist and president from 2003 to 2005 says: "AVSA has changed considerably since I was president. This evolution can be attributed in large part to Internet technology, and it began back in 1992 when I was secretary. I remember writing to the Executive Committee while I was an intern at Cornell University, urging them to consider establishing a website. It was the newest thing, and although they agreed and we did get one started, there were considerable problems at first," she says.

According to Janet, "Jim Owens picked it up, and it grew from there." She says that establishing a members-only portal was a major step because it provided a worldwide means to assist violet growers with helpful information without jeopardizing membership goals. "It beautifully augments the *African Violet Magazine*," says Janet.

"Now there is a weekly newsletter available to subscribers via email, complete with information, illustrations and useful tips. Vendors have also benefited from the Internet as growers can obtain plants and supplies from their websites, not just from their ads in the *AVM*," Janet adds.

According to Janet, rather than growing larger, the Society has evolved wider, reaching those who treasure these plants in many ways. "Let's all hope that we can continue this evolution."

Joyce Stork

Joyce Stork was president of AVSA from 2007 to 2009. Joyce says, "In 2001 when I first began serving as Third Vice President of AVSA, the Society finances were a major concern. A few months later, the September 11 attack on the Pentagon almost cancelled the 2002 Washington, D.C., convention," says Joyce. She says that membership decline was steep in those days for all plant societies. "The challenges with hurricanes, flooding and pandemics have been relentless," she says. "But AVSA has effectively weathered them all, thanks to better investing principles, the establishment of endowments, and generous donations from members." Joyce attributes an upsurge of the millennial generation's love of plants for helping to stabilize membership and increase the demand for African violets in the marketplace.

"AVSA has also greatly changed its look in the last 20 years," says Joyce. "This was bound to happen as the world moved from print publishing to a digital world," she adds. "The *African Violet Magazine* became more colorful and more modern in its style, especially in recent years." Joyce feels the AVSA website has evolved to become a powerful tool for teaching, communication, advertising and doing business. "AVSA has worked hard to use social media platforms, which have been effective and economical for teaching new growers and encouraging them to join."

"It's been exciting to watch the energy of the volunteers and staff who have stepped forward to help with leadership and projects," Joyce says. She adds that although there are too many individuals to name, they have been dedicated to making sure that AVSA is there for many years to come. "AVSA continues to be about people as much as it is about violets. We continue to carry out the original objectives, but in new ways. AVSA truly has a bright future."

Ron Davidson

Ron Davidson, who was AVSA President from 2009 to 2011, shared a lot of historical information and insight into how AVSA has evolved, and his comments gives us a glimpse back in time.

"I got involved in African violets after I retired from the Army in 1990," says Ron. "My lovely wife, Jan, had African violets that we would move from post to post with us each time we changed stations. When I was transferred to Saudi Arabia, she had to give away all of her violets." Ron says when he and Jan returned to the U.S. and were stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, Jan saw a sign for an African violet show and sale. "She went to the show and stayed the whole day looking at plants and talking with the local club members," says Ron. Jan joined the club and became an active member, along with joining the Lone Star AVC, Dixie AVS and AVSA. "I supported her by making two PVC pipe stands with Volkmann light fixtures and helped in setting up shows and sales," says Ron.

After Ron retired, they moved to the Dallas area and Jan joined Alpha AVS of Dallas, although they lived a long way from where the evening meetings were held. "I sat in the rear of the room during those meetings and programs, and that's when I got interested in African violets," says Ron. "We went to our second AVSA convention in Denver in 1995 and have not missed a convention since, entering exhibits at every one, and making lots of friends along the way," he says.

Ron was on the Shows & Judges Committee, served as an AVSA Director and was responsible for setting up the new entries program (the first time it was used was at the 1999 convention in Houston). "We were very lucky that year because Joe Bruns, who wrote the program, was at Houston," says Ron. He continued to serve in the entries area until he became AVSA President in 2009.

"I have seen lots of changes, improvements and hard times in AVSA over the years. I worked with the office staff before, during and after the hurricane that caused damage to the AVSA office building.

I surveyed the damage for the Executive Committee and membership," he says. Ron adds that repairs were accomplished within the insurance budget and with donations from the membership.

According to Ron, AVSA endured a paper records headache for the convention shows until 1999 when the Entries and First Class programs began. He says this major improvement reduced the time and volunteer hours needed to produce a large show. "I would guess that 100 percent of local, regional and state affiliates now use the Entries program," he says. "The program has gone through a number of changes over the years, and I expect that in the future, entries will move into the digital area, saving more time."

Ron points to the many updates on the AVSA website that make it more user-friendly. "One major improvement is that members can now register for the convention online, thus reducing staff time; I expect this process to continue to be improved," adds Ron.

Ron discussed recent events affecting AVSA, including the AVSA office building sale in 2019 and rental of a temporary space that then flooded and damaged computer equipment and storage items. He credits member donations for helping to purchase new equipment and software. Ron says the COVID-19 virus pandemic that resulted in cancellation of the 2020 convention and show was replaced with the "outstanding idea of a virtual convention during the same timeframe. It proved to be a fantastic success with viewers from around the world," says Ron. He also mentioned how AVSA's office manager "did a wonderful job of working out of her home" during this trying time.

"Another major improvement is that the Show and Judges Handbook now is available in digital form, as are presentations made during conventions that can be used as programs at local meetings." He also pointed to the *African Violet Magazine* becoming available in digital form as well as a hard copy for members.

"The future of AVSA rests with the members who volunteer their time and expertise. One area I would like to see receive more guidance and support is the Nominating Committee," he says. He would like to see the committee encourage more new members to become directors. "New members bring fresh ideas to the table; prior directors know the ropes about the process," he says. He believes current officers, committee chairs and directors should spot and recommend members to the Nominating Committee to serve as directors and provide a slate of candidates for member voting each year.

"It has been an honor to work with the AVSA membership over the years. I enjoy the conventions every year just to see existing friends and make new ones. AVSA exists because of the members' love for African violets and for making wonderful memories with other members with the same passion."

Linda Hall

Linda Hall was AVSA President from 2011 to 2013. She also has thoughts about the history and advances: "Social media has taken over most publications and education on African violets. What I have observed is that as social media increased, membership in AVSA decreased. I actually tracked that from 2000 to 2013," says Linda. She says some of this might be attributed to older members passing away and younger people preferring social media to printed materials today. She adds that she thinks social media gives away for free what the magazine can provide. "This is just changing times, but it does not help AVSA's bottom line," she says.

Linda sees a big difference in two other areas: First is chemical use to control pests and diseases. "We are much more conscientious about what we spray in our homes and greenhouses and are no longer using all those toxic chemicals.

"Second is the type of lighting we are using for our grow lights," says Linda. She said many members started with T12 bulbs, then T8s and now LEDs. "We used grow bulbs, daylight bulbs, cool whites and warm whites. What will the future bring?"

Winston Goretsky

For the last reflections, we hear from Winston Goretsky, who was president from 2015 to 2017. He shares a lot of optimism for the future of our beloved African violet, worldwide love of growing the plants, and his thoughts about technology's effects on our hobby.

"I began photographing at AVSA conventions as the official photographer nearly 25 years ago. That time has seen the evolution of technology move from film photography to the levels of digital technology, which was unfathomable at the early adoptive stages," he says. He credits technology with advancing our ability to run computerized shows with lists, labels, entry cards, awards and electronic variety lists. "Those who can remember how everything was done previously through a tedious, lengthy, and manual process will realize the incredible advancements that have been made in just shows alone."

Winston says that websites that have been created, revised and re-imagined have expanded our reach to the rest of the world "to share and encourage others in the culture and cultivation of our favorite gesneriad, the African violet." He adds that social media, text messaging, live video conferencing, and many other forms of communication have flooded our daily life so we can learn, share and exchange our knowledge with others with very little effort. "This year, 2020, will mark the first availability of the *African Violet Magazine* in electronic format. This will allow our magazine to reach the African violet world in a way that will enhance our delivery of and access to this publication," he says.

Global reach also has erased borders, says Winston. "There are enthusiasts who grow African violets and hybridize new varieties all over the world:

> ... "many new and exciting things are on the horizon."

Russia, Ukraine, Japan, China, Czechoslovakia, United Kingdom, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Iran, Turkey, and so many other countries from whom we have been amazed to learn of their African violet activities. It's humbling and exhilarating for a hybridizer to see a photograph of their hybrid being grown in a country 10,000 miles away from where it originated."

Winston is thrilled to know that despite our isolation and concern our efforts to reach others are futile, "the African violet is 'out there' providing so many people with excitement, happiness and the interest to share and learn more about its culture and cultivation. It truly is a plant that brings people together and allows us to share a common bond, which is a rare thing to find these days," says Winston.

"I know, as time moves forward, that many new and exciting things are on the horizon. I also know that I can sit back, enjoy my African violets and wonder, what on Earth is coming next?"

We're all ready for what comes next, thanks to the past and current leadership and volunteerism in our society. I hope you have enjoyed these reflections and will look forward with enthusiasm to the continued evolution of our beloved African violet.

Celebrating AVSA 2000 to 2005

By Teresa Odle Email: editor@avsa.org

As we count down to AVSA's 75th Anniversary celebration in May 2021, we're looking back and celebrating the history of AVSA and the popularity of growing African violets. In this issue, Carolee Carter, chair of the Publications Committee, compiled interviews from past AVSA presidents (see page 44).

We also are focusing on the years 2000 to 2005 in this issue with featured photos of plants that were hybridized, won major show awards, or that were and still are favorites of African violet growers. I've gone through some of the past issues of *African Violet Magazine* and gathered some excellent tips from articles published in those years that stand the test of time.

Product Problems

Strange things can happen to plants that have no obvious explanation. Often, African violet growers assume the worst: rampant pests or widespread disease. But sometimes the answer is something a little off. Here are two great examples from the July/August 2000 issue:

Georgene Albrecht gave an update in the Gesneri-Advice column of Dale Martens. One of Georgene's tips included this: "One of our delightful new growers, Nan Walther, had a very interesting thing happen. Her violets started having huge pollen sacs and mutation of the flowers. She finally found that her Superthrive had evaporated over the years and that is was exceptionally strong." Georgene explained that when Nan used one drop per gallon, it was actually much more concentrated. "Remember, Superthrive contains growth hormones. It must be used sparingly and one must use a fertilizer with it."

George R. Stewart described a problem his sister-in-law had with her violet collection, one she assumed came from a virus or bug. Soon after his visit with her, George was watering his collection and thought he had grabbed a half-gallon container of his premixed violet food. He poured it into a few pots before a strong smell took over. "I had the wrong half-gallon bottle and had watered two plants with ammonia!" George described his attempts to rescue the few plants he had "watered," but they later died.

This added weight keeps the wick from twisting and curling.

At least some good came out of his error, though. "I called my sister-in-law and asked her about her use of window cleaners," George said. "I found out that she freely used ammonia window cleaners around her violets. I shared my ammonia experience," George said. He added that he and his sister-in-law now took precautions when using chemical-based cleaners around their collections. "Today, we both have fine collections of healthy violets," he said.

Making Wicks Behave

I loved this tip from Jana Strathman in the November/December 2004 issue of *AVM* and have reprinted it here:

Do you have trouble getting your wicks into the proper holes, or has a plant dried out because the wick didn't make it into the water?

To prevent this from happening to my plants, I take the smallest "sinker" or "split shot" used for fishing and pinch it onto the bottom of my wicks. This added weight keeps it from twisting and curling, and even from snagging on the egg crate.

AVSA 75th Anniversary: 2001 to 2005

L to R: Meredith Hall in Chicago, 2001; Janet Riemer at the Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago, 2001; Daphne Snell, Chicago, 2001.

L to R: Judy and Paul Kroll with Paul's Hudson Memorial Award, Washington, DC, 2002; Kazuo Horikoshi with Vladimir and Tatiana Kalgin, Washington, DC, 2002; Art and Mary Boland, Baton Rouge, 2003.

L to R: Court of Honor, Tucson, 2004; Elmer Godeny, Sue Ramser, and Jenny Daugereau in Tucson, 2004; Paul Sorano and Marie Burns, Cincinnati, 2005.

Do Your Trailers Need A Makeover?

By Paul Kroll Lancaster, New York

Most growers of African violets have no trouble with grooming the rosette types. They might find a sucker to remove now and then, but following the triangles and sticking to that rule of three keeps most rosette plants on track and looking their symmetrical best. Growing and grooming trailers is a different story! I confess that it took me quite a while longer to feel comfortable with trailing-type African violets and their management.

Since judges evaluate trailers based on form rather than symmetry, we need to help them attain their best form. Remember, form does not mean round only. Form can be oblong, triangular, oval, etc.

Bite the Bullet and Make the Cuts

One of my local club members said years ago, "I love the appearance of trailers, but mine always look like weeds compared to the rosettes I grow." Well, perhaps one needs to bite the proverbial bullet and see why that is true. When hobbyists first begin to grow trailers, even for their own enjoyment only, the early results might look like weeds, indeed! Most often, that is because the plants lack proper grooming, which can be due to fear on the part of the grower. Yes, fear. It can be more than a bit scary to dig into grooming a trailing violet. What I mean is, you must be bold and remove more leaves and/or crowns than you might think necessary.

One of the reasons a trailer does not bloom properly is that the growth is too thick and needs to be thinned, perhaps isolating the crowns to allow more light to reach the proper places and encourage buds and eventual flowering. When you look at a trailer that has been allowed to grow as it pleased, you will see many extra leaves. Strive to look carefully at the crowns and remove anything extra that blocks them from being clearly observed among all that growth.

A Grooming Example

I have used Cirelda as my example for this article. It is a semi-miniature trailer hybridized by Canadian Pat Tracey (AVSA registration number 3620, CA 202 – 1979). See the first photo of the "weedy looking" plant. The second photo shows the leaves that have been removed to produce the appearance in the third photo of the plant, partially groomed. The last

Left: Cirelda trailer before grooming. Center: Removed leaves. Right: Partially groomed plant.

photo, with the ruler included for size, shows the final result of my cutting away even more surplus leaves to show the crowns separated nicely. The plant has been repotted into a 5-inch tub to grow on.

Cirelda: final result.

Many of us are visual learners and need to see a "surgical procedure" like this to grasp the technique thoroughly. I realize that, but suggest to growers to not be afraid to tackle this type of thing; you can do it! We all know full well how strong and resilient our plants can be. They will respond to this grooming, and what might seem to be severe treatment.

> It can be more than a bit scary to dig into grooming a trailing violet.

Keep in mind that for show purposes, trailers need to grow from one "trunk" beneath the soil line and have at least three crowns visible to be eligible for awards. The type of treatment I have described here is not the Japanese style of pinning down the runners, but rather grooming the plant so that it still grows from one stem or trunk below the soil line. There is only so much "burying" of the trunk or stem that can happen before it will be necessary to break up the crowns and start them over individually.

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Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Stanley Ko — Shatin NT, Hong Kong

Ko's Ernest Desire
•(11262) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Single chimera purple sticktite ruffled star/white-green stripe, white puff fantasy.
•Dark green, quilted, variable white-spotted red back. •Standard.

Ko's Festive Magic
•(11263) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Semidouble chimera white frilled star/purple stripe.
•Medium green, ovate, quilted. •Semiminiature.

Ko's Glamour
•(11264) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Double chimera white star/medium pink stripe, green ruffled edge.
•Medium green, wavy. •Standard.

Ko's Midnight Kiss
•(11265) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Single chimera purple star/lavender stripe, pink puff fantasy.
•Dark green, plain/red back. •Standard.

Ko's Show Time
•(11266) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Single chimera green sticktite pansy/white eye, purple stripe.
•Dark green, quilted, serrated, variable white-spotted red back. •Standard.

Ko's Surprising
•(11267) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko
•Double chimera green ruffled star/white stripe.
•Medium green, quilted, wavy. •Standard.

Milk's Baby Fat
•(11268) 05/08/2020 •S. Ko/Shu-Hua Fu
•Single chimera wine pansy/white stripe.
•Chimera variegated light green and white, quilted.
•Semiminiature.

Valerie Despres — Aylesford, Nova Scotia, Canada

Chelsea Chantalle
•(11269) 05/09/2020 •V. Despres
•Semidouble-double pink/purple fantasy.
•Dark green, quilted. •Small standard.

Pat Hancock — Middletown, OH

Buckeye Camera Ready
•(11270) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble hot pink large ruffled pansy/lavender and purple fantasy.
•Variegated medium-dark green, pink and cream, quilted, glossy, ruffled. •Large.

Buckeye Center of Attention
•(11271) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble-double pink two-tone large ruffled pansy/lavender and purple fantasy.
•Variegated medium green, pink and cream, plain, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Clockwork Orange
•(11272) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble coral-orange ruffled pansy.
•Variegated medium green and cream, plain, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Clownin' Around
•(11273) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble light pink wavy pansy/darker eye, purple fantasy.
•Variegated medium green and cream, glossy, serrated. •Large.

Buckeye Color Me Hot
•(11274) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble coral-red large ruffled pansy/variable dark red edge.
•Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Columbus Platinum
•(11275) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble-double pink two-tone large ruffled pansy/lavender and purple fantasy.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, quilted, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Eye Candy
•(11276) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble-double blue-purple pansy/thin white ruffled edge, variable white fantasy.
•Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Foto Finish
•(11277) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble white large ruffled pansy/pink patches.
•Variegated medium green and cream, plain, glossy. •Large.

Buckeye Kiss 'n' Tell
•(11278) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble lavender-pink ruffled star/purple fantasy.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, glossy, ruffled. •Large.

Buckeye Let's Roll
•(11279) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble plum ruffled pansy/variable thin white edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, quilted, glossy, serrated. •Large.

Buckeye Main Squeeze
•(11280) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble dark blue-purple pansy/raspberry ruffled edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, quilted, glossy, ruffled. •Large.

Buckeye Real Deal
•(11281) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble blue pansy/random white-green ruffled edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, glossy, ruffled. •Large.

Buckeye Ribbons 'n' Lace
•(11282) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble pink ruffled pansy/white rays, random white edge.
•Variegated dark green, pink and cream, glossy, serrated. •Large.

Buckeye Ruby Ripples
•(11283) 05/11/2020 •P. Hancock
•Single-semidouble ruby-red ruffled pansy.
•Variegated medium green and cream, glossy, ruffled. •Large.

Registration Change

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

Rivermist Eva Britta
•(10984) — Add "variable" to foliage description (variable white-spotted red back).

Rivermist Galaxy
•(10973) — Add "variable" to foliage description (variable white-spotted red back).

Rivermist Zombie
•(10986) — Add "variable" to foliage description (variable white-spotted red back).

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: winners@avsa.org

Central California AVS, CA — Winners:
• Best AVSA Standard Collection: Smooch Me, EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Jersey Snow Flakes; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jitterbug Begin the Beguine; Best Standard: EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia; Best Trailer: Carolina Bodacious; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* GxB #1, **Stephen Covolo.**
• 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Scrumptious, Buckeye Sketch Artist; Best Miniature: Morgan's Declan Duff; Design Sweepstakes, **Renee Wilson.**
• Best Design, **Lola Sutherland.**
• Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Karen Gallow.**

In Memory

Therese J. Lynam

Therese J. Lynam of Brandon, Florida, passed away on March 9, 2020. Therese had a heart of gold and always was willing to help anyone who needed her. Her passion was growing African violets and helping the homeless when she could. She was a member of Tampa AVS, AV Council of Florida, Dixie AVS and AVSA. She served as treasurer of Tampa AVS. Therese is survived by three children, three siblings, and three grandchildren.

Lynne H. Wilson

Lynne H. Wilson of Tampa, Florida, passed away on March 12, 2020, after a five-year battle with lung cancer. For many years, Lynne was a Girl Scout leader and a volunteer. Later, she developed a passion for African violets and over the years was president of Tampa AVS and AV Council of Florida and was immediate past president of Dixie AVS. She also was a member of AVSA and had served as the society's Affiliate Chair. She is survived by her husband of 54 years, William L. Wilson, her daughter and son-in-law, a sister and brother-in-law, and nieces and nephew.

AVSA Recognition

Do you know someone who serves AVSA and deserves recognition? We would be pleased to honor them with a Society Award. The website, www.avsa.org, has applications for nominees. We want to acknowledge those who serve the Society, especially those who work in the background without anyone noticing all that they do to move the AVSA forward. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Hall at linda.hall6641@hotmail.com.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Jack Wilson

Honorary Life Member Recipient, at the AVSA National Convention in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 2003

Let's Go to the Library!

By Richard Craft Las Vegas, Nevada

Email: library@avsa.org

AVSA has a library? In the conventional sense, the AVSA Library is described as consisting of a "wide variety of materials." In the past these included content featured on DVDs, videos, 35 mm slides, and cassettes. Yes, there was a time that affiliates could *rent* those last two items and use them in club activities.

The media produced by the AVSA Library Committee has changed dramatically over the years. The following products currently are available to order from the AVSA website:

- **Educational media** such as "Perfectly Pittman! From Sunrise to Sundown," is available in DVD or thumb drive. Webinars such as "Meet the Gesneriad Family — A Guide to Easy Growing" are available as digital downloads.
- **Conventions** from the past have been archived on DVDs and thumb drives and members still can order thumb drives. They consist of a narrated slide show of new introductions of African violets that year, photos of horticulture and design exhibits, and candid shots of people attending the convention.
- **A photo gallery** on the AVSA website of all the winning horticulture and design entries has replaced the Convention DVDs for 2018 and 2019.
- **A video** was created last year of the Salesroom Opening at the Houston Convention. Check out the AVSA YouTube Channel to view it.

See the box on the right for links to these products. We are in the process of evaluating and possibly eliminating some of the older Library offerings. You may want to order them while they still are available.

Library Committee Involvement in 2020

This year raised the bar on how AVSA could present conventions to the public through the Virtual Violets Convention website. The Library Committee thanks everyone who contributed to the Virtual Convention:

- The 136 exhibitors who submitted 561 photos of their African violets, gesneriads and designs.
- The many hybridizers from around the world who shared photos of their newest cultivars (187 African violets and 63 gesneriads.)
- Dr. Minh Bui, Dale Martens, Adrienne "Annie" Rieck and Glenda Williams for their educational workshops. These presentations can be viewed anytime on AVSA's YouTube Channel.

You can read all about the Virtual Convention in the July/August *African Violet Magazine*.

Be a Part of AVSA History

- Are you a skilled photographer who wants to display your beautiful photos of winning showroom exhibits?
- Do you have experience behind a video camera and want to tape an AVSA workshop?
- Can you creatively edit a video so everyone can enjoy an educational offering on our YouTube Channel?

Contact Richard Craft at library@avsa.org if you would like to join a team that keeps the history of AVSA alive.

AVSA Library Website Links

Educational Media
www.avsa.org/education

Past Convention DVDs
www.avsa.org/store-convention

Photo Gallery of Past Convention Show Winning Plants and Designs
www.avsa.org/library_conventions

AVSA YouTube Channel
www.youtube.com/c/AfricanVioletSocietyofAmerica

Photo Credit: AVSA Library Committee

Honey Berry, Cheers, Beginner's Luck

Exhibited by: Kurt Jablonski
Best Texas-hybridized Collection (Mini/Semimini)
2019 Annual Convention, Houston

Photo Credit: AVSA Library Committee

Cajun's Lil Forever Blue

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan
Hybridized by: Belinda Thibodeaux
2nd Best African Violet in Show
2019 Annual Convention, Houston

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Persian Prince

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: S. Sorano
Best in Show for Susan Hapner, 2004 AVSA Convention in Tucson
Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Orchard's Bumble Magnet

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Wilson
Tally Time, 2003 and 2019
Honor Roll, 2004
Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

B-Man's Palma

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Dianne Good
Hybridized by: B. Curcuruto
2002 Annual Convention,
Washington, DC
Large Standard

Minutes of the African Violet Society of America, Inc.

May 24 to June 2, 2020 Virtual Violets Convention

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Annual Business Meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was held through the 2020 Virtual Violets Convention website from May 24 through June 2, 2020, and by votes received from May 1 through June 4, 2020.

Sue Ramser, President, stated a quorum was represented by the email votes received. President Ramser appointed Jeri Anderson, Chair; and Stephen Covolo and Richard Craft to approve the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes. Candace Baldwin reported that the 2019 minutes of the Annual Business Meeting were approved.

Randy Deutsch, Nominating Committee Chair, reported in the March/April 2020 *African Violet Magazine* and on the Virtual Violets Convention website. The Nominating Committee submitted the following to serve as directors until the conclusion of the 2023 Annual Meeting:
Douglas Allen, Michigan
Dr. Minh Bui, Maryland
Winston J. Goretsky, Alberta, Canada
Nancy Hayes, Connecticut
Sandra Skalski, New Jersey

No further nominations were received. The directors were elected from the ballots submitted. The formal installation of these directors will take place at the installation banquet in Atlanta in 2021.

President Ramser recognized the retiring Directors:
Sallie Barlow, Louisiana
Linda Ingle, Oregon
Linda Kilby, Pennsylvania
Sandy McIntosh, Kentucky
Renee Wilson, California

The retiring Committee Chairs were recognized by President Ramser:
Sue Hoffmann, Resolutions
Paul Kroll, Editorial Board
Penny Smith-Kerker, Library Committee

Via the 2020 Virtual Convention website, it was announced that the 2021 AVSA 75th Anniversary Convention would be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Kathy Spissman will be serving as Convention Chair and extended a video invitation on the Virtual Violets Convention website. She was joined by Suzanne Myers, Convention Co-Chair; Libbie Glembocki, Convention Show Chair; and Brenda Petry, Convention Show Co-Chair.

The Annual Membership Rebate this year was awarded to Violet Barn with 55 new AVSA members.

Sue Hoffmann, Resolutions Chair, posted a list of deceased members from this past year on the Virtual Violets Convention website and the list was published in the July/August issue of *AVM*. No additional names were added.

There was no further business to report.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Corondan, Interim Secretary

Committee to approve:
Jeri Anderson, Chair
Stephen Covolo
Richard Craft

African Violet Society of America, Inc. Combined Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2019

Assets:	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$ 69,954.51
Investments	91,713.03
Accounts Receivable	2,517.21
Inventories	5,621.67
Prepaid Expenses	9,000.00
Restricted Assets:	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	77,236.45
Investments	466,407.30
Capital Assets:	
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	910.29
Total Assets	723,360.46
Liabilities:	
Accrued Payroll Taxes Payable	245.35
Sales Taxes Payable	1,507.80
Deferred Revenue	117,245.74
Total Liabilities	118,998.89
Net Assets:	
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	396,594.33
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions-Designated	150,629.42
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	57,137.82
Total Net Assets	$604,361.57

Interested in Serving on the AVSA Board?

AVSA Members may apply to be considered for nomination to the position of Director. Director duties include:

- Attending the annual AVSA conventions during their term in office.
- Completing an annual report to the Board of Directors.
- Accepting duties as assigned, including but not limited to, serving on committees, overseeing a region of affiliates, helping at annual conventions, etc.

Those who have served at least two years as an AVSA Director can apply to serve in one of the officer positions. Leading up to 2021, AVSA will be seeking candidates for 3rd Vice President and Secretary, as well as Directors.

Download an Application Form from the AVSA website.

Wish to Suggest a Candidate for Director or Officer?

Please contact Linda Hall, Nominating Committee Chairman, at nominating@avsa.org to suggest an individual who should be considered for nomination as a director or officer. The Chair will contact the potential nominee to request an application form. Please include the individual's phone and/or email contact information.

AVSA Directors and Executive Committee Members pose for a group photo at the 2005 AVSA National Convention in Cincinnati. Photo credit: Winston Goretsky.

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African Violet Magazine Advertising Deadlines

- January/February issue: November 1
- March/April issue: January 1
- May/June issue: March 1
- July/August issue: May 1
- September/October issue: July 1
- November/December issue: September 1

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African Violet Multiplication

AVSA Best Varieties List

75th Anniversary: Commercial Legends

November • December 2020 Volume 73 Number 6 avsa.org

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Email: office@avsa.org.
Hours: Mon–Thurs, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. CST.
•**Official Correspondence:** AVSA Secretary, P.O. Box 22417, Beaumont, TX 77720. *Email:* secretary@avsa.org.

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•**Membership and Promotion Committee:** Send ideas, offers to help, requests for assistance to: Stephen Covolo, 31734 Mill Dr., Springville, CA 93265. *Email:* memberpromo@avsa.org.
•**Affiliate Committee:** For information or how to organize a chapter, write Jeri Anderson, 1640 N. Kelly Place, Tucson, AZ 85715. *Email:* affiliate@avsa.org.

Shows and Judges

•**Shows and Judges Committee:** Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email*: judges@avsa.org.
•**Show Schedule Approval:** For information on Shows, AVSA Awards and approving schedules, write to: Susan Anderson, 4040 E. Maldonado Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85042.
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•**Judges' Duplicate Cards:** Send self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Mary Corondan, 434 Plumwood Way, Fairview, TX 75069. *Email*: judges@avsa.org.

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African Violet Magazine

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•**Master Varieties List (AMVL) & Supplements:** Download from AVSA website or order from AVSA office for $2. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, Plant Registration (see above).
•**Research:** Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3014 W. Amherst Rd., Muncie, IN 47304. *Email:* jsmith4@bsu.edu.
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•**Commercial Activities, Sales and Exhibits:** For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, 4710 W. Justin Lane, Spokane, WA 99208. *Email:* commercials@avsa.org.

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African Violet MAGAZINE

Volume 73 Number 6

ON THIS COVER:
K's Lilac Infusion
Best in Class, 2018 AVSA-AVSC Convention
Exhibited by: Bruce Williams
Hybridized by: K. Hajner
Standard
Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

FEATURES

Growing and Judging Variegated Violets—Kurt Jablonski 10
It's Beautiful, but What Do I Call It?—Rich Follett 14
WIN x SKI and Family—Ronn Nadeau 18
Tips and Techniques: Wicks—Dale Martens . . . 23
Best Varieties List, 2020—Trudy Brekel 26
Honor Roll of African Violets—Trudy Brekel . . 28
Making a Move—Nancy A. Nash 32
Hybridizing Rivermist African Violets—Joan Barnick Baker 34
AVSA 75th Anniversary: Commercial Legends—Carolee Carter 44
75th Anniversary: AVSA Commercial Members, 1980s—Lynn Lombard 49
75th Anniversary: 2005 to 2010 50
My Adventure with "White Queens"—Frank Tropea. 52
Alexei Kuznetsov Remembered—Rich Follett. 54
Statement of Ownership 60

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Design: 1890s—Paul Kroll 4
Design: 1940s—Elmer Godney 4
Design: 1960s—Danny Tidwell 5
Design: 1980s—Elmer Godney 5
Lucien Croteau—75th Anniversary 9
Rebel's Rose Bud—75th Anniversary 13
Alliance—75th Anniversary 17
Jolly Orchid—75th Anniversary 17
Precious Red—75th Anniversary 29
Blue Dragon—75th Anniversary. 51
Harbor Blue—75th Anniversary 51
***S. tongwensis* 3397 Uppsala Clone**—75th Anniversary. 53
Aca's Red Ember—75th Anniversary. 57
Broadway Star Trail—75th Anniversary 57
***Kohleria* 'GG Lava Lamp'**—75th Anniversary . . . 62

DEPARTMENTS

Index of Advertisers 2
Officers and Staff 2
President's Message—Sue Ramser. 3
My First Violets—Sandra Skalski. 6
And the Winners Are—Mary Corondan 16
Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund—Janet Riemer 16
Boyce Edens Research Fund—Randy G. Deutsch 20
Coming Events 21
Building Maintenance Fund—Randy G. Deutsch 21
Family Portrait—Mel Grice 22
In Search of New Violets—Dr. Jeff Smith 24
Registration Report—Joe Bruns. 30
Shows and Judges Committee—Mary Corondan . . 31
Booster Fund—Dianna Walston 37
Barbara Burde Endowment Fund—Randy G. Deutsch 56
In Memory 58

CONVENTION

Georgia: The Peach State—Kathy Spissman . . . 38
2021 AVSA Convention Awards—Sharon Gartner 40
Celebrating 75 Years: Atlanta 2021 43

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Index Of Advertisers

Amazon Smile—AVSA 59
American Orchid Society 63
AVS of Canada 63
AVSA Drinkware 33
Bloomlala Apparel 48
Dandy Pots ..... Inside Back Cover
Dave's Violets ..... Inside Back Cover
Enchanted Gardens 63
Gesneriad Society ..... Inside Back Cover
Glenda's House of Violets 63
Indoor Gardening Supplies ..... Inside Back Cover
JoS Violets 64
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses 64
Moonlight Nursery ..... Inside Back Cover
Mrs Strep Streps Supplies 63
Perfectly Pittman DVD in AVSA Store 8
Physan 20 64
Swift Moist-Rite Planter ..... Inside Back Cover
The Violet Barn ..... Back Cover
Violet Peddlers Plus 64
Violet Supply 63

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Email: president@avsa.org

To our AVSA Friends:

As this column is being written our weathermen here in Texas are predicting cooler weather. As you read this, some of you are experiencing winter temperatures. This reminds us that the end of the year is approaching, and what a year it has been! So many events have been cancelled or rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that 2021 will be a year in which we again will be experiencing the excitement and beauty of African violet shows and events.

It is time to prepare our plants for the long winter ahead and the spring shows that will follow including our AVSA 75th Anniversary Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. More information about the 2021 Atlanta Convention can be found on page 38.

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of AVSA Past President Hortense Pittman on August 26. Hortense hybridized many beautiful African violets throughout the years. More information about Hortense appears on page 58. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her and grow her beautiful plants. We extend our sincere condolences to her family.

Your Executive Committee has been meeting virtually on a regular basis to accomplish the business of AVSA. We have exciting news to announce. Digital AVSA Memberships are available for those of you who prefer a digital-only membership. They are $28 per year. This class of membership will receive the *AVM* in digital format. If you prefer to have the print version, it is still available for $35, plus you also will have access to the digital version. The digital *AVM* will be posted on the website on the first of the month: January, March, May, July, September and November.

Your Executive Committee has been meeting virtually.

Fortunately, Hurricane Laura did not damage our AVSA Office. Many areas of the Gulf Coast suffered severe damage and are still recovering from this devastation. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who still are recovering from this hurricane.

As you are reviewing your end-of-year tax planning, please remember AVSA in your planning. AVSA is a 501(c)3 organization and offers many giving opportunities: Barbara Burde Fund, Booster Fund, Boyce Edens Research Fund and the Tinari Endowment Fund. Donations may be sent to the AVSA Office or made online using PayPal or a credit card.

At this time of year your Executive Committee would like to thank all our volunteers who help your Society run efficiently. At times we are remiss in thanking and showing appreciation for the people who work tirelessly for our Society. Without our volunteers, your Society could not accomplish the things we do. We would like to give a big round of applause to all those who volunteer countless hours for AVSA. THANK YOU!

Your Executive Committee would like to extend Greetings of the Season to you and wish for you a happy and healthy New Year. Feel free to contact me or any of your Executive Committee if you have concerns, suggestions or recommendations. Please continue to remember through our two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1890s

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Paul Kroll

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1940s

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Elmer Godney

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1960s

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Danny Tidwell

Design: 1980s

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Elmer Godney

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

My First Violets: Violet Multiplication

By Sandra Skalski Mullica Hill, New Jersey

Email: sskalski@comcast.net

Hemingway wrote, "One cat just leads to another." At one point, the writer owned more than 50 cats. Many African violet collections can put those "cat numbers" to shame. Violets are addictive, and once you have one or two, you are very likely to acquire 10 or more. You will have favorite plants that you want to share with friends and family. You might even want duplicates of a favorite for yourself. Or perhaps you admired a variety that someone else grows and they offered you a leaf. How do you turn that leaf into more plants?

Tips for Leaf Propagation

Leaf propagation is the easiest way to multiply your violets. There are as many ways to propagate leaves as there are growers. Most of these techniques will give you baby violets, but some are more reliable. Here are a couple of general guidelines:

- Soil mix, sphagnum moss and perlite all are suitable rooting mediums. Water tends to be an inferior rooting medium, because the roots developed in water don't readily adapt to potting mix and the plant will need to grow new roots once in soil.
- Though any healthy leaf will work, fresh leaves from the middle row will give you the best chance of success. Reject fading, older leaves from the outer row. They are unlikely to produce babies.
- Keep the leaves and soil mix covered to maintain a humid environment. The rooting mix should be evenly moist, but not sopping wet. When needed, water with your regular fertilizer solution.
- Prepare a leaf by snapping the petiole or cutting it on an upward-facing diagonal with a sharp knife. Leave about a 1.5-inch stem.
- Place your leaf starts in good light.
- Leaves will form roots before they grow babies.
- Smaller cups limit the amount of soil the leaf has to fill with roots and will yield quicker results.
- Label your cups or bags so you will not forget the variety name.

Leaves will form roots before they grow babies.

Small plastic cups are ideal for starting standard plant leaves. Fill the cups with potting mix, place the cut petioles in the mix, and slip into a ziplock sandwich bag. Foam egg crates are ideal for starting leaves from smaller plants like miniatures and semi-miniatures. I cut them in half, making two "nurseries." I fill the cells with my potting mix and set a leaf down in each cell. If I'm working with a tiny miniature, I might put two leaves down in the cell. I mark the upper left corner with a Sharpie and create a separate chart with the variety name. The entire nursery goes into a ziplock bag.

Another easy way to start a leaf is to place about 2 inches of potting mix in the corner of a ziplock sandwich bag, add your leaf, then seal the bag. You can hang this on the side of your plant stand or even tape it to a window. Remember to label your leaf starts. Otherwise, you will be disappointed when you have unidentified, healthy babies.

When the Baby Plants Grow

After a few months, you will have many baby plants, like the ones in Photo 1. Wait until the babies have at least four leaves and look large enough to handle before you try to separate them. Remove the entire clump from the rooting container (Photo 2). To separate the babies, gently tease them apart,

Photo 1. Baby plants from leaves.

Photo 2. Clump removed from container.

Photo 3. Gently teased baby roots.

Photo 4. Potted in container and sealed with baggie.

trying to keep some roots on the baby plants (Photo 3). Resist the urge to keep all of the baby plants. The tiny plantlets with long, thin stems will not give you strong plants. Save two or three of the strongest plantlets. Pot them into small plastic cups or pots and seal in a baggie or other container until they are well rooted (Photo 4).

When you put down leaves, you will usually get an exact duplicate of the variety, but there are some exceptions. Sometimes, growers get a plant that does not look like the parent. This is called "sporting." Some heavily fantasied blossoms might not "come true" with leaf propagation. You might get a solid color blossom with no fantasy, or you might get another color, such as the color of the fantasy splotches.

Chimera Propagation

Chimeras are plants that have two separate genetic codes that most often express themselves as striped or pinwheel blossoms. These plants need to be propagated by sucker or by blossom stem since they will not come true from a leaf. New chimeras usually arise as sports from a leaf.

Look for plantlets that have birthmarking, which shows up as dark red splotches on the back of the leaves. These plantlets have a good chance of being different from the parent plant. Sports are part of the fun of starting leaves, and you might end up with something you like better than the original plant.

Sucker Propagation

An even faster way to get a new plant is by rooting a sucker. Sometimes a single-crown plant will grow a smaller plant near the crown or between rows of leaves. If left in place, the sucker will distort the symmetry of the main plant. However, if you carefully remove the sucker with a sharp, pointed tool, you can root it to start a new plant.

This is a great way to start a chimera. Trailer crowns can also be rooted in a small pot or cup.

Successful Propagation

What can go wrong with violet propagation? If the leaf is older or unhealthy, you are unlikely to get baby plants. Try using a young, fresh leaf. Wet soil

and fungus might cause leaves to rot. Your starting mix should be moist, but not sopping.

If you place a leaf in a large amount of soil, it might spend all of its energy making roots instead of babies. Use the smallest container possible, relative to leaf size. If a leaf has been rooted for several months but has not produced babies, try giving it a tug. Sometimes a bit of stress will convince the leaf to reproduce. Of course, there is a chance you will be too successful. If your leaves give you many plants, keep one or two of the best and share the others with family and friends. Or grow some for your club's plant sale. Save room in your growing area for different varieties.

Are you ready to multiply your violets? Happy growing!

"Perfectly Pittman" Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.

Jolly Orchid

Available in the AVSA Store. DVD and Thumbdrive format $20

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Lucien Croteau

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: D. Croteau
Won Best in Show for Tom Greer in 2008, National Show
Standard

Growing and Judging Variegated Violets

By Kurt Jablonski Miami, Florida

Variety is the spice of life, or so they say, which is why African Violets have remained so popular among hobbyists in a world filled with many tempting plants to grow. Today — thanks to hybridizers — violets come in all shapes, sizes, foliage and blossom types. Personally, variegated standards are my true "diamonds" in the jewelry box of our favorite houseplants.

When violets first were introduced, they remained very close to their ancestral parents. Fortunately, they have the predisposition to "sport," or mutate, giving us new traits and characteristics. One such mutation was from a plain, green-leafed plant to one marked with margins of white and cream on the leaf edges. Not only did this new trait add to the allure of the violet, it also brought about new techniques in growing these plants. Such beauty has led to a substantial increase in popularity among show growers. For this reason, it is paramount that not only growers — but also judges — learn all we can about variegates' culture and how to determine point scoring in judged competition.

Growing

In my research, I came across very few articles about growing variegates and even less about judging them. I did find that when variegates were first popularized in the 1960s, it was believed that they were more difficult to grow and that a special regimen was required to successfully grow them. Growers commonly thought that they needed a fertilizer developed exclusively for variegated plants, more intense light, the perfect spot on the light stand and most importantly, special temperature requirements. It was believed they needed to be grown cooler in order to variegate properly. Cooler temperatures combined with Peter's Variegated Special 5-50-17 fertilizer was deemed the recipe for success. The fertilizer's higher phosphorus and lower nitrogen led to more intense variegation in the plants.

We must maintain adequate green in the foliage so that the plants grow and bloom well.

Although this method led to some success in growing variegated plants, I believe that we have since learned a great deal about these plants, which has helped us improve their growing. It has been my experience that variegates do not need a totally unique culture to grow well but that growers should tweak certain aspects of their care for ultimate performance.

There is a fine line between too much and too little variegation when growing show plants. Most growers believed in the early days of variegates that plants with the most variegation in a show were to be rewarded. Now we know this to be untrue because chlorophyll is essential for plant growth. We must maintain adequate green in the foliage so that the plants grow and bloom well. This is one area that is extremely important, because unlike with solid green plants, having too little green in the leaves can be detrimental. Too much variegation equals less bloom. All of the variegated plants in my collection have the edge-type variegation. Ideally, I aim to have my show plants exhibit 25 to 30 percent variegation and 70 to 75 percent green in the leaves. This balance has proven to be a winning combination when I show.

Consistent care plays a vital role toward achieving this proportion in the foliage. All of my violets are raised on individual reservoirs. I use T12 light fixtures, one warm and one cool tube, which run 9 hours per day. My temperatures are not always ideal. When the air conditioner is running, it is 76 to 78 degrees, but for the better part of the day it remains around 88 to 90 degrees. Yes, that is extremely hot! I have dispelled the myth that growing in warmer conditions means your variegated plants will turn solid green. My plants maintain beautiful variegation.

For me, temperature plays less vital a role than fertilizer. I have found that feeding variegates a balanced fertilizer such as Dyna-Gro 7-9-5 or Jack's 20-20-20 at 1/4 tsp instead of a fertilizer high in phosphorus allows the plants to develop their beautiful colors in the foliage as well as enough green to bloom adequately. Inconsistent care and varying fertilizers at each watering always ends up with a culture break of uneven/inconsistent variegation and leaf size in my plants.

Judging

When the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges* first was written many years ago, African Violet shows were made up of all green plants. Today, variegated violets are available in all types and sizes. The beauty in their foliage and blooms has made growers exhibit them at an alarming rate. Because of their popularity in the past 15 years, our shows have begun to feature more variegates than ever before. For this reason, growers and judges must understand how our plants are scored. Our handbook has some information about variegated violets, but to my mind, it needs expansion because these plants are so favored among growers and often make up the majority of entries in our shows. Two sentences in the book are insufficient to understand how to properly score them.

As I mentioned earlier, culture of variegated plants plays a vital role in producing a perfect show plant. The key to success is diligence. Inconsistent care leads to culture breaks in the foliage. Aside from crown-variegated plants, edge-variegated plants should exhibit consistent margins of cream, white or pink along the leaf edges. This is to say that should a culture break occur, and a plant develops either a solid green leaf, solid white leaf or an entire row of either leaves, judges need to deduct points under condition. Up to one point off for each wrong colored leaf seems appropriate.

Due to lack of guidance pertaining to variegates, judges do not know where to take points off.

Take a solid green plant as an example. During judging, if the plant were to exhibit leaves of a lighter green color, yellow leaves or marks on the foliage, points would be taken off without question. The same should be true of variegated plants marked with inconsistent variegation in the leaves. Due to lack of guidance pertaining to variegates in the handbook, judges do not know where to take points off and consequently ignore the problematic leaves.

I have included two pictures of plants with uneven variegation. In Photo 1, Tiger has some leaves that are almost entirely green, some almost entirely white, and one or two leaves showing the correct amount just along the leaf edge. Surprisingly, this plant won Best in Show in the commercial division of an AVSA National Show. This is an excellent example where if the judges had more explicit deductions

Photo 1: A Best in Show Tiger that has uneven variegation. Photo credit: Marjorie Bullard.

in the handbook, several points would have been taken off, reducing this plant to a more appropriate red ribbon.

Photo 2 depicts a plant that was a blue-ribbon winner at a National Convention. This Lyon's Black Magic definitely is not a blue-ribbon entry. The crown and the subsequent two rows of leaves are completely white, while other leaves in the outside row are solid green. At some point in this plant's life, it had at least two changes in culture that account for the changes in variegation. Most likely, it was from using different fertilizers or drastic temperature changes.

Photo 2: (left) Wide variation in leaf variegation on a blue ribbon Lyon's Black Magic. Photo by Bob Clark. Photo 3: 2017 National Second Best in Show Winner Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler with consistent and appropriate balance of green and variegation. Photo by Mel Grice.

Each fertilizer has a unique make-up and the plant will respond with different growth when fed different food. Seasonal drops in temperature often bring about more variegation as well. Again, judges lacking sufficient explanation about point-scoring of variegates leads them to reward inferior plants with ribbons they do not deserve. This in turn encourages exhibitors to continue to show mediocre plants rather than learn what they need to do to improve their growing techniques.

Lastly, Photo 3 illustrates a plant that displays an even amount of variegation from the crown to the outer row of leaves. This Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler was grown over a period of a year and a half to achieve the desired size and look of the plant. As with all my show plants, I removed any marred, irregular, off-size or baby leaves to allow the plant to put energy into its mature foliage. Since I had to learn the hard way about rotating fertilizers and the result it has on foliage, I fed this plant a consistent diet, maintained ideal growing temperatures and gave it prime shelf space so that I would groom it at every possible opportunity. Putting in the time and effort with this plant was well rewarded. It was judged 2nd Best in Show and Best Standard at the 2017 Orlando National Convention.

Consistent culture and care will always lead to receiving the maximum points under condition and is within **total control** of the exhibitor. Exhibiting a well-grown and equally variegated plant is a true testament to a grower's skills because it requires an attentive eye and adaptation to produce a winning plant. While I don't claim to be an expert, I do believe that through my own successes and failures I have learned how to grow a variegated plant that is balanced in foliage and has sufficient bloom.

It is our duty as growers and judges to understand all types of African violets and score them correctly in our local, regional and national shows.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rebel's Rose Bud

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: R. Bann
Won Best in Show for Richard Nicholas, 2007 National Show
Standard

Contest Entry —

It's Beautiful, but What Do I Call It?

Naming, Sharing, and Completing Show Entries for Russian Hybrids

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

In recent years, Russian and Ukrainian (R/U) hybridizers have made stunning contributions to the African violet world. While it is wonderful to have so many new and exotic varieties to enjoy, we must remember as responsible African violet growers that it is still necessary to use correct names when discussing, sharing and showing these R/U beauties.

In the same way that we are conscientious about honoring the contributions of North American, European, and other hybridizers worldwide, it is vital to honor and thank our R/U hybridizers by upholding the same standard. How can we do that, though, when the names are in a different language and are written in a different alphabet? Some basic guidelines follow. If you read, remember and follow them, R/U African violet hybrid names will be less challenging to learn and share.

Formatting of Names

R/U African violet names are not formatted the same way as AVSA-registered varieties. The name of the R/U African violet often begins with the hybridizer's initials, followed by a hyphen and the name of the hybrid (usually, one or two words, as in the popular trailer LE-Erika). In another widely used configuration, R/U hybridizers will place their own name in parentheses after the variety name, as in Tenets Galaktik (Morev).

In a third (and less common) option, if the hybridizer gives away a seedling and allows the recipient to name it, the name would read "seedling hybridizer name," as in "seedling Morev name" or "SM-*****. Knowledge of these formats makes it possible to know, at a glance, who has hybridized each variety. Once you understand the patterns, it will be easier to get these names right.

One can quickly see that where translation goes, confusion follows!

Translation and Transliteration

In most cases, R/U hybrid names cannot be accurately or reliably translated into English. Russian and Ukrainian hybridizers often name their African violets for mythological figures, important landmarks, popular names, connotative (as opposed to denotative, or dictionary) word meanings and usages, or abstract concepts that do not necessarily have a literal English translation. What's more, in cases where translation is possible, there might be several different options and several different spellings for the same word or concept. One can quickly see that where translation goes, confusion follows!

It is poor etiquette to ask for an English translation of the name of R/U African violets. It also is improper to use an English translation in place of the R/U name when discussing, sharing or showing an R/U hybrid. Instead of translation, think in terms of *transliteration* — using the phonetic spelling of the Russian words (which are represented in the Cyrillic alphabet).

Even transliteration, however, has its pitfalls. The following example comes from fellow R/U African violet grower and devotee Beth McConnell Baker: "One of [the] things that frustrates many with transliterations is there is no one way to spell things. It depends on which country did transliteration first.

In many countries the *ya* sound is ja, or ia. Thus, you may see Ян as IAN, JAN, or YAN. First Class uses IAN, but it is pronounced YAN."

Joe Bruns, Chairman of the AVSA Plant Registration and Master Plant List Committee, further clarifies: "The *International Code of Nomenclature* (*ICNCP*) requires that cultivar epithets (names) that are in an alphabet other than Latin should be transliterated using either the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* or the International Standards Organization (ISO) transliteration standards, but whichever method is used should be consistent within the same publication.

"The AVSA uses the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables*, readily available for free online, for both First Class and the AVML. Note that there are different *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* for the Russian and for the Ukrainian languages, but the differences are slight. The я character is transliterated as "ia" (pronounced "ya"). Sometimes you will see a Russian name with "iia," which can be confusing. However, in English sometimes we pronounce "ia" as in Sonia (Russian я, transliterated to ia), and sometimes as in Maria (Russian ія, transliterated to iia)," says Joe.

Perplexed? You are not alone. That is precisely why these issues need to be addressed! Just focus on the idea of transliteration rather than translation and you will be headed in the right direction. When in doubt, contact the AVSA or an R/U hybridizer or grower for guidance. I have found all the R/U growers and hybridizers whom I have consulted to be friendly, patient, eager to help, and, without exception, pleased to be asked.

Naming for Shows

It is particularly important to ensure that properly transliterated R/U names accompany R/U African violet hybrids wherever they go because the R/U hybridizers do not make use of standardized descriptions in the same way that the AVSA does, relying instead upon photos to convey the characteristic traits of a particular variety. Without standardized descriptions to consult, R/U hybrids might be ineligible to show if the name chain has been broken.

Now, let's see how all of this works: We start with a popular R/U hybrid named ПТ-Апрельский Денек. Very few Americans, unless they speak Russian, will be able to make sense of the Cyrillic representation of this African violet's name. The picture will no doubt become clearer if I tell you that, according to Google Translate, ПТ-Апрельский Денек means "A Day in April," but we have just broken two of our promises — not to translate and not to leave out the name of the hybridizer. At this point, we would not even be correct to enter "A Day in April" in an AVSA show!

So, let's straighten all of this out. If we add the hybridizer at the beginning and use the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* to transliterate (spell the Cyrillic words phonetically instead of translating), we come up with PT-Aprel'skiy Denek (the hybridizer's initials, followed by a hyphen, followed by the name).

Building upon this new factually, culturally and politically correct transliteration, we can do a bit more research to learn that "PT" stands for the hybridizer Tatjana Pugacheva. By entering "Aprel'skiy Denek" into the Google Translate field from Russian to English (just type "translate Russian to English" into the Google search field and press "enter"), we confirm the central image as "April Day," which lets us know what Tatjana Pugacheva (PT-) had in mind when she chose the name. This process does not offend or cross any cultural boundaries for the sake of our learning, as long as we keep our Google image to ourselves.

It is now time to talk about and share this gorgeous hybrid. We call our fellow African violet enthusiasts and say "Oh, you should see my 'PEE-TEE-AY-PREL-SKY-DEN-EK'! That Tatjana Pugacheva really knows how to hybridize a showstopping African violet." We might even want to enter it (correctly identified) in an AVSA show.

Employ transliteration rather than translation; remember to use the hybridizer's initials; and keep those images you Googled to yourself. Then, your favorite R/U hybridizers will be happy to share their world and their work with you for years to come.

And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069
Email: winners@avsa.org

First AVS of Denton, TX — Winners:
•Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Heart and Soul, **Danny Tidwell.**
•Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Storm Clouds; Best Trailer: RS-Zimniy Tsvetok, **Glenda Curry.**
•Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Jan Johnson.**
•Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* USBRG 98-083, **Jill Reiss.**
•Best Design, **Janet Castiglione.**

Rocky Mountain AV Council, CO — Winners:
•Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Storm Watch, Cajun's Ma Cher Amie, Frozen in Time; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: N-Snezhnyi Georgin, Jolly Devil, Rob's Slap Happy; Best Standard: Cajun's Cher Amie; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Estet'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Deb Carnevale.**
•2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Alliance, Buckeye Kindred Spirit, Psychedelic Moon; Best Miniature: Roller Rink; Best Species, S. 5b clone *confusa*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Susan Shaw.**
•Best Semiminiature: Denver Blues, **Trudy Brekel.**

Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received in July and August 2020 Total: $210

Two-tone — $25-$49
Betsey Branson
Glenn Chamulak
Columbus AVS
In memory of Nancy Carr
Ron and Jan Davidson
In memory of Barbara Kelly
First AVS of Dallas
In memory of Barbara Kelly

Two-tone (continued)
Angelina Grundhof
John Hesselberth
Carol Hixenbaugh
North Texas AV Judges Council
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Spring Branch AVC
Caroline Storey

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Alliance

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by:
Catherine Thompson
Hybridized by: D. Croteau
Best in Show,
2006 National Show
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Jolly Orchid

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by H. Pittman
Hybridized in 2007,
Best Varieties in 2019 and 2020

WIN x SKI and Family

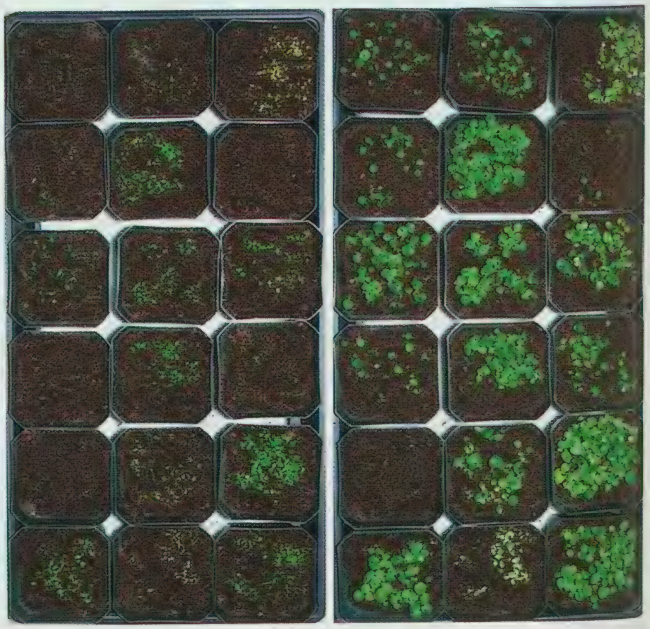
By Ronn Nadeau website: www.NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com

With lots of help from my wife, Katsuko, I run a small business producing and selling African violet seeds. In this article, I show how we test our seeds for the desirability of the plants into which they grow and the time it takes to go from sowing the seeds to evaluating the blooming plants. To do so, I used seeds from the cross WIN x SKI, in which WIN was the pod parent and SKI the pollen parent (Photos 1 and 2). All varieties used in my hybridizing and seed production have 3-letter names. This makes it possible to write the parentage of a cross on small Post-it flags that I attach to flower peduncles after pollinating them. Incidentally, SKI was produced from a cross of DAN x RAD, as explained in my article, "Looks Like a Chimera, But…" in *AVM*, January/February 2020, page 8.

Top, Photo 1: WIN, pod parent. Bottom, Photo 2: SKI, pollen parent.

Materials and Methods

On February 14, 2020, we sowed approximately 100 WIN x SKI seeds in a 3.5-inch pot containing a soilless germination mix. Seeds were sown on dampened PRO-MIX PGS seed germination mix. We transplanted the seedlings into PRO-MIX HP with mycorrhizae. We used square 2.5-inch and 3.5-inch pots (ITML brand) and 3-inch round pots (Pöppelmann brand). Our fertilizers were Jack's 15-16-17 Peat-Lite Special and Miracle-Gro 15-30-15. They were applied as solutions at concentrations of one-fourth to one-half teaspoon per gallon of reverse osmosis water generated by a home unit. The seedlings grew under LED lighting from 4-foot, 2-tube fixtures that ran for 12 hours per day. We enclosed the pot in a clear plastic sandwich bag and placed it in a tray with 17 other pots. The seeds began germinating 14 days after sowing and we photographed them at 20 and 58 days past sowing (Photos 3 and 4).



Left, Photo 3: 20 days past sowing (along with seedlings from other crosses). Right, Photo 4: 58 days past sowing (along with seedlings from other crosses).

Seedlings Produced

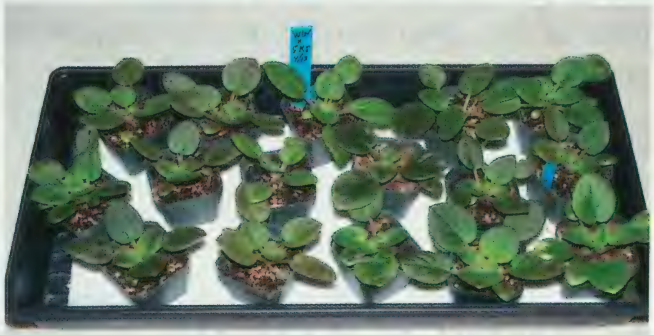
On April 13, 2020, we gently removed from the seed pot the WIN x SKI seedlings that were 58 days past sowing (Photo 5). We then teased them apart on a damp cloth and planted 16 of them in 2.5-inch pots.

Photos 5 (top) through 8: Separating 16 seedlings and planting them in 2.5-inch pots.

All 16 seedlings chosen to grow on for evaluation ... survived.

We discarded the remaining seedlings. We then placed the 16 WIN x SKI seedling pots in one-half of a 10-20 tray, and 16 seedlings from another cross in the other half of the tray. The tray was covered with a transparent plastic dome and placed under white light LED tubes. We removed the dome 10 days later.

By May 29, which was 3.5 months after sowing, the 16 WIN x SKI plants were crowded in their half-tray, so we transferred them to their own tray (Photo 9). Nine days later, June 7, they were transplanted into 3-inch round pots and placed in two trays, each with eight plants. On July 3, we moved the budded or blooming plants to four trays on one shelf, thereby keeping all 16 WIN x SKI plants together for a photo (Photo 10). A peduncle was removed from each plant for Photo 11. They were evaluated on July 27, 2020.



Top, Photo 9: 16 WIN x SKI seedlings. Bottom, Photo 10: Win x SKI plants together for a photo shoot.

Photo 11: Peduncles removed from each cross.

Results

All 16 seedlings chosen to grow on for evaluation as adult plants survived to the end. All the offspring grew with flat rosette foliage. Twelve had pink flowers, two had purple, and two were bicolored. The blue pattern in the flowers of SKI showed up in only two of the offspring. Both parents in the cross had pansy-shaped flowers, and so did all their progenies, as expected. The female part of the cross, WIN, had nonvariegated foliage, and so did the offspring, which is normal. I chose three plants (Photo 12) for further work. Would they come true from leaves? And might they be fecund enough to use for seed production? If like past WIN x SKI and other seed crosses, I would have viable and popular seeds to sell to growers.

My next article will be about a cross that made several nice new varieties, including one named WAL, (Photo 13) which is being tested for trueness and fecundity.

Top, Photo 12: Three offspring plants chosen for further work. Bottom, Photo 13: Close-up of WAL, another cross offspring being tested.

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: $150

Two-tone — $25-$49

Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI
Spring Branch AVC, Conroe, TX
Caroline Storey, San Marcos, TX

Thumbprint — Under $25

Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Connie Cronin, Columbus, NE
Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL

Thumbprint (Continued)

Denise Rill, Hampstead, MD
Emilia Rykowski, Pompton Plains, NJ

Coming Events

Fall and winter African violet shows and sales still might be cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus. This list represents those shows still scheduled on our website as of September 30. Be sure to check the AVSA website Events page (www.avsa.org/events), search the local club on Facebook, or contact the organizers below for the latest information.

October 3 — Texas
Spring Branch African Violet Club
Plant sale
Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Teresa Kaminski: tckaminski@sbcglobal.net

November 7 — Oregon
Portland African Violet Association
Education/displays/sales
Portland Nursery
9000 SE Division
Portland, OR
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Alice Wagner: 503-631-3925
alicemaeblue@yahoo.com

February 12-13, 2021 — Florida
First Lakeland African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Christ Lutheran Church
2715 Lakeland Hills Blvd.
Lakeland, FL
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sales); noon-5 p.m. (show)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (show and sales)
Mary Jane DiLorenzo: 863-529-5420
www.firstlakelandafricanvioletsociety.com

February 26-27, 2021 — Florida
Tampa African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Fellowship Hall, Journey Christian Church
4207 North Boulevard, Tampa, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Lou Harden: 813-924-2686
mlhard@verizon.net
www.tampaafricanvioletsociety.com

Building Maintenance Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: $45

Two-tone — $25-$49
Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI

Thumbprint — Under $25
Moonlight AVS, Fort Worth, TX

Family Portrait: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Lollipop'

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, Ohio
Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Streptocarpus 'Bristol's Lollipop' is an example of one of my favorite gesneriads. This outstanding variety comes to us from Ralph Robinson (Rob) at the Violet Barn in New York. Semidouble white blooms with dark purple pencil-thin lines radiate from the throat onto the face. The plant always produces a bouquet of blooms above compact, flat-growing, medium-green foliage. It begins blooming at an early age so you must be careful to trim off early blooms so that it does not bloom itself to death before enough leaves grow. I know that this sounds painful to those wanting blooms, but you will be rewarded later with nearly constant blooming.

Streptocarpus 'Bristol's Lollipop' Care

Streptocarpus thrive in conditions that are similar to African violets. However, there are some differences. *Streptocarpus* need more light to flower well. Placing two T8 tubes or LEDs a little bit higher above the plants works well for me. Pale, bleached leaves mean that the plants are probably getting too much light if there is no nutrition problem. *Streptocarpus* can tolerate much cooler temperatures than African violets, but they grow and flower best at room temperature. They suffer when temperatures exceed 80 degrees, just like African violets.

Streptocarpus like to be fed with a commercial water-soluble fertilizer at the rate of one-eighth teaspoon per gallon of water every time you water. What is sold commercially as "tomato fertilizer" (18-18-21) works well for me. I use reverse-osmosis water to avoid the buildup of salts in the potting mix. Many expert growers water their streptocarpus plants by hand — making sure to pour off any excess water that remains in the saucer that the plants have not absorbed. *Streptocarpus* do not grow in swamp-like conditions. They like to dry out a bit between waterings. *Streptocarpus* might get too dry and wilt a couple of times, but too many instances of leaf collapse will result in damaged leaves.

Potting *Streptocarpus*

I use an open potting mix (Pro-Mix HP) that has a lot of perlite (the nearly 40 percent in Pro-Mix, plus enough added to bring it to about 60 percent perlite). This allows for a lot of air circulation at the roots.

Streptocarpus 'Bristol's Lollipop', exhibited and photographed by Bob Clark.

Streptocarpus like to be potted high up in the pot so that the crown of leaves does not sit in water. Basically, make a "moat" around the crown. Repot

your plants often with fresh soil and they will reward you. Unfortunately, I seldom seem to get around to this as often as I should. But when I do, I am rewarded with a wealth of showy blooms.

The spectacular plant shown in the photo was grown and exhibited by Bob Clark at the Gesneriad Society 2020 Virtual Flower Show this year. See many other well-grown and seldom-seen gesneriads on The Gesneriad Society website at www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2020-convention-st-petersburg-fl/2020-virtual-flower-show/

Thanks Rob and Olive Robinson for creating and distributing this wonderful hybrid!

Tips and Techniques: Wrapping a Wick

By Dale Martens

I recently had a sprouting *Sinningia*. I took these photos of how I wrapped the wick in the pot. These were taken with the camera pointing down on the top of the pot and show a newly cleaned and repotted sinningia tuber breaking dormancy with several new sprouts.

When wick watering using an acrylic or nylon wick to grow sinningias, have the top of the tuber within 1/2 inch of the rim of the pot. Wrap the wick around the tuber and add soil on top of the wick and tuber to expose just the tops of the sprouts to light. Never expose the wick to air because it will draw too much water.

Wick wrapped around the tuber.

Added soil covers the wick.

In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

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African violets can grow and flower year-round in our homes. In contrast, outdoor plants such as iris and tulips have a limited flowering season. Hybridizers of these plants have a brief window in which to plan and make their crosses. Some spend months planning how to make the maximum use of their plant material and time, trying to achieve a new success in hybridizing in just a few days or weeks. Then they must wait months for the seeds to mature and perhaps a few years for the seeds to germinate and for the new plants to grow and reach maturity. They can spend a great deal of time simply waiting to see whether their plants have amounted to anything.

I recently tried my hand at hybridizing Christmas cacti. It took three years from the cross to flowering F1 plants, and another three years to get flowering F2 plants. Patience and luck are virtues with hybridizing many types of plants.

We are fortunate that we can hybridize African violets at any time of year. Yes, it takes several months for the seed to mature and additional months for the seedlings to mature and flower, but a year's waiting time is a short investment in developing a new plant. If you find yourself with some extra time over the upcoming holidays, look over your plant material and try to envision how that type of bloom, in that color, would look combined with that type of foliage or that size of plant. Use your imagination and see what new kind of African violet you can hybridize. After all, we are always "In Search of New Violets."

Q: Is it possible to combine the thumbprint pattern with the wasp flower shape?
A: Yes, this would be an easy combination to achieve. The only concern is if the reduced size of the petals in a wasp flower shape will be big enough for the thumbprint pattern to show up. The smaller petal size might make them look solid rather than being edged in white.

We are fortunate that we can hybridize African violets at any time of year.

The cross would be easy to achieve because both traits are dominant. I would suggest crossing your favorite thumbprint flowered plant with a good wasp flower plant. Neither trait is inherited maternally, so it does not matter which parent is the seed parent or pollen parent. Since both are dominant traits, you should get a high percentage of thumbprint-wasp shaped flower plants in the next generation. Some of the other offspring should be thumbprint and non-wasp or solid colored and wasp flowered.

Q: Can the color of the seed be used to tell if the seeds are viable or not?
A: Viable African violet seeds usually are dark in color, typically a deep brown or black. I have noticed that they often are shiny as well. Seeds that are pale and appear fuzzy often are not viable.

Another test hybridizers use is to put the seeds on a folded piece of wax paper. Viable seeds tend to "roll," while non-viable seeds tend to "scoot" or slide. Many hybridizers find this a more reliable test of viability than seed color. Of course, the best test for viability is to plant the seeds. If they grow, they were viable.

Q: The pattern of the plant Kimi is very distinctive. Is the genetics of this pattern known?
A: At the time Kimi was released, several hybridizers attempted to reproduce the pattern in other colors. Most reported that the pattern did not show in the F1 generation. This was a surprise since most patterns in African violet flowers are dominant traits. The failure to show in the F1 generation would suggest the trait could be a recessive one. However, most hybridizers stopped at the F1 generation and did not continue to an F2 or backcross of an F1 to Kimi. That information would have been helpful to confirm that this flower pattern trait definitely is recessive.

Q: A cross of the species *S. shumensis* with Jolly Marvel (coral ruffled semi-double) produced offspring with very dark blue flowers. Where did the dark blue color come from?
A: The production of dark blue flowers in the F1 generation of that cross is a bit of a surprise. Blue is a dominant color to coral. However, with *S. shumensis* having very pale blue flowers, one might have anticipated light blue flowered offspring. Usually, a dominant gene that restricts the color in the offspring is responsible for control of color intensity. Evidently, the pale color of *S. shumensis* does not follow this pattern. The color of Jolly Marvel is an intense rich coral. This plant might have contributed to the dark or intense color of the offspring. Combine the color intensity with the dominance of blue flowers over coral flowers and the result could be dark blue flowers in the F1 offspring.

A cross of two F1 generation plants would produce mostly blue flowers in the F2 generation, but I would expect the color intensity to range from dark to medium, to perhaps a few pale colors like *S. shumensis*. Coral actually is a dark form of pink, so there should be some pinks in the F2 generation. A few coral-colored flowers also should be produced, but this would be a very rare outcome in the F2 generation.

You did not mention the foliage, but did the F1 offspring inherit the strawberry texture of *S. shumensis* foliage? Those raised dots with long hairs often inherit as a dominant trait when this species is used as a parent.

Q: I recently saw a post of what appeared to be variegated Clackamas foliage. Is that even possible?
A: Yes, it is possible. Clackamas foliage (also known as watermelon veins) is a difficult trait to work with as the plants are often difficult to grow and flower. However, the trait is a dominant foliage trait and would be passed on in the F1 generation. I am presuming that the seed parent was variegated and that the pollen parent had Clackamas foliage. The variegation would be inherited maternally to the seedlings. At least half of the seedlings would inherit the Clackamas foliage. The trait would be readily seen in the seedlings, so selection could occur very early, before the seedlings bloomed.

Clackamas foliage also tends to shrink the plant size. Most plants with this trait are miniatures. Some hybridizers have tried for standard-sized plants with this trait, but that has been difficult to achieve. Clackamas is also known for being very unruly in growth, so not many hybridizers have worked with this trait.

Q: Would it be possible to combine longifolia foliage with yellow flowers?
A: This is an interesting combination. Longifolia foliage is the easier trait to work with because it is a dominant trait and can be inherited from either the seed parent or pollen parent. Yellow flower color is still difficult to work with and the inheritance pattern for this color is still murky. I would try crossing a strong yellow-flowered plant with a plant with longifolia foliage and pale flowers, preferably any shade other than blue.

Blue flower color is the most dominant and the hardest to work around. Yellow flowers often are associated with whites, pinks and reds. I would think that any of these colors might allow yellow to present if one parent has strong yellow flowers. Once you have the longifolia foliage, keep breeding to these plants back to yellow-flowered plants to reinforce the chance for yellow flowers. It might take a couple of generations to get the yellow flowers back out and combined with the longifolia foliage. Good luck.

AVSA's Best Varieties List for 2020

By Trudy Brekel Littleton, Colorado

Phone: 303-452-9015 • Email: violetlady7@msn.com

The votes are in, and we have the list of the 25 best African violet varieties for 2020. Any African violet grower can participate in voting. This year, we had an excellent response to voting, especially from African violet growers who receive the *AVSA Growing Tips* newsletter. We had more votes come in from nonmembers this year who learned about the voting on AVSA social media sites. Here's hoping that those nonmembers decide to join AVSA.

The Best Varieties List helps growers learn about violet varieties that are easy and enjoyable to grow. Hybridizers with several cultivars on the Best Varieties List probably have plenty of other hybrids that growers will love.

There are always two ways you can choose to vote — by filling out the form available on the AVSA website and mailing it in, or through our online voting system. Voting for favorite 2021 varieties will close June 30, 2021. Watch for more 2021 voting information in future issues of *African Violet Magazine*, *AVSA Growing Tips* and on AVSA social media sites.

1. Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler
•(8745) 07/27/1998 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble bright pink ruffled pansy/variable raspberry fantasy.
•Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy/red back. •Large standard (DAVS1624).

2. Ness' Crinkle Blue
•(8136) 01/19/1995 •D. Ness
•Double dark blue star/variable thin white edge.
•Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back.
•Semiminiature.

3. Precious Red
•(9724) 01/15/2007 •H. Pittman
•Semidouble-double dark red pansy.
•Dark green, plain/red back. •Miniature.

4. Jolly Orchid
•(9719) 01/15/2007 •H. Pittman
•Double orchid and white pansy.
•Medium green, plain, quilted.
•Miniature (TX Hyb, DAVS 1661).

5. Picasso
•(6924) 10/04/1988 •M. Tremblay
•Double light blue and white/variable white fantasy.
•Variegated medium green, plain/silver-green back.
•Large standard.

6. Buckeye Seductress
•(9669) 07/13/2006 •P. Hancock
•Double dark lavender star/wide white band, green edge.
•Variegated medium green and cream, plain.
•Large standard (DAVS 1632).

7. Blue Dragon
•(9516) 12/17/2005 •Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano
•Double light blue large frilled star/raspberry edge.
•Dark green, plain/red back. •Large standard.

8. Rob's Boolaroo
•(8053) 03/05/1994 •R. Robinson
•Semidouble light pink sticktite pansy/bright blue fantasy.
•Medium green, quilted. •Semiminiature trailer.

9. Rob's Vanilla Trail
•(9296) 11/21/2003 •R. Robinson
•Double cream to blush white pansy.
•Dark green, quilted, serrated, pointed.
•Semiminiature trailer.

10. Buckeye Nostalgia
•(10484) 01/05/2012 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble pale blue ruffled pansy.
•Variegated medium green and cream.
•Standard (DAVS 1753).

11. Frozen In Time
•(9167) 02/03/2003 •Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano
•Single-semidouble white pansy/variable lavender tinge; green edge.
•Variegated light green and ivory, quilted.
•Standard.

12. Jersey Snow Flakes
•(9820) 12/14/2007 •R. Kurzynski
•Single-semidouble white pansy/white sparkle overlay.
•Variegated medium green and white, plain quilted.
•Standard.

13. Powwow
•(7708) 06/15/1992 •K. Stork
•Semidouble red pansy.
•Variegated green and cream, plain. •Standard.

14. Rose Boutique
•(9028) 04/12/2001 •G.T. Smith
•Double pink frilled star/darker eye.
•Variegated medium green, pink and white, plain, quilted. •Standard.

15. The Alps
•(7813) 10/03/1992 •K. Horikoshi/H Sawara
•Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/light blue stripe.
•Medium green, plain, quilted. •Standard.

16. Carolina Elegant Affair
•(10913) 07/31/2017 •L. Abplanalp
•Single-semidouble white ruffled star/pink patches.
•Variegated medium green and white, quilted, wavy.
•Standard.

17. Edge of Darkness
•(10677) 03/19/2014 •Paul Sorano/ Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
•Semidouble dark purple star/frilled white edge.
•Variegated dark green and ivory, serrated/red back.
•Large standard.

18. Hunter's Kashmir
•(11227) 07/17/2019 •K. Muzalewski
•Semidouble lavender frilled pansy/purple edge.
•Variegated dark green and cream, ruffled.
•Large standard.

19. LE-Karusel'
•(11024) 05/24/2018 •E. Lebetskaia
•Single white large ruffled star/red patches.
•Variegated medium green and white serrated.
•Standard.

20. Pixie Blue
•(2598) 09/16/1974 •L. Lyon
•Single purple-blue/darker center.
•Plain, ovate. •Miniature trailer.

21. Kentucky Gooseberries
•D. Rollins
•Double white star/light pink blush.
•Medium green, serrated.
•Semiminiature (DAVS 1602).

22. Rebel's Splatter Kake
•(8695) 01/31/1998 •R. Bann
•Single-semidouble pink large fluted star/darker eye, purple fantasy, white-green edge.
•Medium green, spooned, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. •Large standard.

23. Rob's Chilly Willy
•(9461) 07/30/2005 •R. Robinson
•Double silver-white star/medium blue overlay, edge. •Crown variegated medium green and white, pointed. •Miniature.

24. Rob's Fuddy Duddy
•(7886) 06/02/1993 •R. Robinson
•Semidouble dark mauve-purple sticktite pansy.
•Dark green, quilted. •Semiminiature.

25. Tiger
•(3433) 06/01/1978 •I. Fredette
•Semidouble dark blue-violet.
•Variegated. •Large standard.

AVSA Honor Roll of African Violets

By Trudy Brekel

Phone: 303-452-9015 • Email: violetlady7@msn.com

Congratulations to the winners of this year's Honor Roll. Two plants made the Honor Roll of African Violets this year. Both are beautiful standards. To be on the Honor Roll of African Violets, a variety must have appeared in the Best Varieties list for three consecutive years.

We had something unusual happen this year. Tiger was on the Best Varieties list for the past 3 years, however, since it was on the Honor Roll back in 1984, it does not qualify to be on the Honor Roll again. This goes to show that even the vintage violets still are popular and can be a Best Variety.

2000
- Powwow #7708 • (K. Stork)
- Rob's Sticky Wicket (6467) • (R. Robinson)

2001
- Windy Day #7719 • (Stork/Boone)

2002
- There were no 2002 additions to the Honor Roll

2003
- Rainbow's Quiet Riot • (R. Wasmund)

2004
- Frozen In Time #9167 • (S. Sorano)
- Orchard's Bumble Magnet #8479 • (R. Wilson)

2005
- Rebel's Splatter Kake #8695 • (R. Bann)

2006
- There were no 2006 additions to the Honor Roll

2007
- ACA's Red Ember #8732 • (J. Brownlie)

2008
- Blue Dragon #9516 • (L. Lyon Greenhouses/ P. Sorano)

2009
- Bob Serbin #8292 • (J. Brownlie)

2010
- There were no 2010 additions to the Honor Roll

2011
- Plumberry Glow #9187 • (L. Lyon Greenhouses/ P. Sorano

2012
- There were no 2012 additions to the Honor Roll

2013
- Harbor Blue #6174

2014
- Rob's Chilly Willy #8170 • (R. Robinson)
- Rob's Fuddy Duddy #7886 • (R. Robinson)

2015-2017
- There were no additions these years to the Honor Roll

2018
- Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler #8745 • (P. Hancock)
- Buckeye Seductress #9669 • (P. Hancock)
- Precious Red #9724 • (H. Pittman)
- Rob's Boolaroo #8053 • (R. Robinson)

2019
- Jersey Snow Flakes #9820 • (R. Kurzynski)
- Buckeye Nostalgia #10484 • (P. Hancock)
- Jolly Orchid #9719 • (H. Pittman)
- Kentucky Gooseberries • (D. Rollins)

2020
- The Alps #7813 • (K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara)
- Edge of Darkness #10677 • (Paul Sorano/ Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Precious Red

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Hybridized in 2007, Best Varieties, 2020
Miniature

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133
Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Dogan Uygun — Karabaglar-Izmir, Turkey

M. Bir Numara
•(11284) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Single plum-pink two-tone pansy.
•Variegated dark green and white, quilted.
•Miniature.

M. Çilli
•(11285) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Single-semidouble light pink large star/blue fantasy.
•Medium green, plain. •Standard.

M. Gece Efsanesi
•(11286) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Single red sticktite pansy/blue shading on ruffled edge.
•Dark green, quilted. •Standard.

M. Göbeklitepe
•(11287) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Double pink star/white edge.
•Medium green, ovate, spooned. •Standard.

M. Izmir Gelini
•(11288) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun)
•Semidouble-double pink frilled pansy.
•Dark green, quilted. •Standard.

M. Mavi Elmas
•(11289) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Semidouble dark blue star/white markings.
•Variegated dark green, white and yellow.
•Standard.

M. Mor Lale
•(11290) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Single light blue frilled bell.
•Medium green, ovate. •Small standard.

M. Mor Sultan
•(11291) 07/04/2020 ·D. Uygun)
•Single-semidouble light pink frilled pansy/mauve eye, mauve and blue fantasy.
•Variegated medium green, yellow, pink and white wavy girl foliage. •Semiminiature.

M. Mor Sünbül
•(11292) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Semidouble-double fuchsia ruffled star/blue edge.
•Dark green, plain. •Standard.

M. Pembe Prensesin Dansi
•(11293) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Double pink frilled star.
•Variegated medium green, white and pink, plain.
•Small standard.

M. Pembe Rüya
•(11294) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Double pink large frilled star.
•Variegated light green, yellow and pink.
•Standard.

M. Sisli Puslu
•(11295) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
•Double blue star/pink and white puff fantasy.
•Dark green, quilted, serrated. •Semiminiature.

Pat Hancock — Middletown, OH

Buckeye Envious Smile
•(11296) 07/04/2020 •P. Hancock
•Semidouble lavender pansy/purple band, variable green-white edge.
•Variegated dark green and cream, plain, glossy.
•Large.

Buckeye Kurteous Attitude
•(11297) 07/04/2020 •P. Hancock
•Double lavender large ruffled star/purple fantasy.
•Variegated dark green, cream and pink, glossy/red back. •Large.

Registration Change

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

Buckeye Summer Song
•(9729) — Add "variable" to blossom edge description (*variable* white-green edge).

Remove "ruffled" from the foliage descriptions of:
Buckeye Camera Ready (11270)
Buckeye Kiss 'n' Tell (11278)
Buckeye Main Squeeze (11280)
Buckeye Real Deal (11281)
Buckeye Ruby Ripples (11283)

Shows and Judges Committee

By Mary J. Corondan, Chair

Email: judges@avsa.org

As the pandemic continues to require social distancing, most shows for 2020 and the beginning of 2021 have been canceled. There have been no judging schools available to attend and very few shows where blue ribbons could be earned.

For student and advanced judges, your judge's certification will not expire from 2020 until further notice. Your certification will be extended. When shows and judging schools are offered once again, you will be notified of your certification expiration date.

For those of you taking your first senior judge's exam, schedules from only ***three*** (rather than five) AVSA approved (affiliate or convention) shows signed by the show or judge's chair will be required to qualify for the examination during the pandemic. Proof of three blue ribbons will be waived until further notice.

If you are currently a senior judge, please continue to take your senior exam on schedule. Proof of three blue ribbons earned will be waived until you are notified otherwise. If you continue to take the senior judge's exam when due and make a score of at least a 93, your certificate will not expire.

Thank you for your flexibility. Please keep in mind that these are temporary adjustments during the COVID-19 pandemic. You will be kept up to date when changes occur. Continue to read the Shows and Judges column for the latest information and review the Handbook regularly. Every attempt will be made to be as fair as possible to all of you who are continuing to pursue your judging goals.

Since there are no shows anytime soon, I have let my plants bloom continuously. During this time of isolation, I have thoroughly enjoyed their beauty. Every few days, I place a different violet or other gesneriad on the kitchen island and breakfast table. What beauty violets add to the home.

Contest Entry —

Making a Move

By Nancy A. Nash Glendora, California

Several years ago, I wanted to embrace my mother's hobby of growing African violets. She had five standards in the living room window for as long as I can remember. I always had one or two in a window, in terra-cotta pots marked by the salts from hard water, and I liked the look. While living in the Portland, Oregon, area, I researched and found the local club. They are a great group of friendly men and women with a wealth of knowledge — and generous! They throw a "leaf shower" for all new members and offer encouragement.

Soon, I had 75 to 100 different named leaf starts and the next thing I knew, I had two racks of plants on wick watering with lights! Kentucky Gooseberry, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rebel's Rose Bud, and many others did very well for me. I love the different kinds of leaves — variegated and ruffled, plus girl's and spoon shapes. The contrast of the leaf colors with the flowers seems to complement the blooms perfectly. Except Ann; for some reason, she hates me.

The Alps, my first chimera.

Readying to Relocate

In 2017 my husband and I readied to move back to Southern California after 25 years. I gave up for adoption most of my lovelies and filled the pods with our belongings to move. I put about 10 plants in an under-the-bed type container, made sure they were damp, but not wet, and sealed them up. I put them at the top of the pod near the translucent roof so they'd get a little light.

> ... the enameled self-watering pots that kept plants too wet in Oregon worked great in Southern California.

Three months later, the pod was delivered and I anxiously opened the box of plants. Life! I lost two, but the rest were fine. I set them up in the windowsill in the kitchen and on a table in the guest room. My club sent me a bunch of leaves and I was ready to get started! I planned to use natural light instead of plant lights. I potted them up and waited.

Setting Up in a New Region

The first issue I had to address in our new home was the water, which is hard and has chloramine. In addition, the air is a lot drier. I changed my planting mixture to include a little less perlite. Some plants did well and others did not. Kentucky Gooseberries and Live Wire died. I struggled with leaves rotting and blossoms falling off before they opened (plus the cat sometimes nibbles the buds off). Having several different types of pots, I soon realized that small

terra-cotta pots did not hold enough moisture and that the enameled self-watering pots that kept plants too wet in Oregon worked great in Southern California. (I drill a hole in the bottom of the inner pot and empty the extra water out about an hour after filling.)

Now I keep only the varieties that enjoy my climate and my care. I like standards. Once again, I have killed Ann, even though I bought two! Happy Harold and Fisherman's Paradise are quite happy. The Alps is my first happy chimera. I look forward to collecting at least one plant from as many hybridizers as I can: Buckeye, Cajun, Rob's, Wesley's, and a space violet from Optimara. When the pandemic allows, I want to find a group to join in my area.

I don't know if I will try to grow Ann again, because I'm a little bitter. It's been a few years of many changes and helping my plants adapt, but African violets give me peace and joy.

Fisherman's Paradise.

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Hybridizing Rivermist African Violets

By Joan Barnick Baker Thief River Falls, Minnesota

I grow my violets and live in northern Minnesota, near the Canadian border. I chose the prefix for my "Rivermist" violet names partly from the city in which I live (Thief River Falls) as I love things/pictures with a misty, ethereal look to them. My love for African violets came from my grandmother, who always had her dining room table full of them, sitting in an east window. I remember one time, when she had to show me her new violet … a pink one! This might have been back in the early 1960s. She was so proud of that plant.

Returning to Violets

Life moves on … I married, had a son, divorced and went to work. Then, on a visit to see my grandmother in the mid-1970s, I became very interested in them again. This time, she showed me how to start plants from leaves, remove suckers and repot plants. She also gave me three plants … one with purple blooms, plus a lavender and a blue-purple bloom (which I still have). After that, I purchased a few plants at our local store and had one shelf with about 10 plants … just Optimara and Rhapsodie.

Hybridizing Start

I decided to try hybridizing after reading about it in a book from the library. That worked out well for me and soon I had about 50 to 70 seedlings growing! Now what to do with all those? I was disappointed with them because I had been hoping for a wide assortment of colors, but got only solid blue, purple or an occasional white/blush color. Later, I saw an ad in a gardening magazine for African violet leaves and plants. So, I sent for a catalog and was spellbound by the descriptions. These were not common, ordinary violets, but rainbows of color in blooms and even some variegated foliage. Not having a lot of money to spend on these, I purchased leaves from a lady in California. Soon I had lots of violets and was buying or making more shelves as fast as I could.

I decided to try hybridizing after reading about it in a book from the library.

Joining AVSA and the Online World

In the early 1990s, I joined the African Violet Society of America and an African violet club down in Minneapolis. But being 300 miles away, I soon left the club, because I could never make it to the meetings and it was difficult to communicate without the Internet. After getting my first computer in 1999, I found online violet web pages, eBay and Yahoo groups to join. I started trading and shipping leaves, which "turned" into eBay selling after a couple years. I have now been an eBay seller for more than 20 years, selling my extra starter plants and leaves.

In 1993, I bought my home and moved from my "trailer house" to a real house! It had a nice, dry, warm basement that was ideal for African violets. I started buying more shelves, lights, etc., and set up my basement growing area. In 2003 to 2004, I started growing and propagating chimeras by cutting the crown off and harvesting the suckers. They were selling very well on eBay and I sold them as fast as I could grow them. I grew in my basement for the first 20 years, until I cut back on the number of plants and moved them up to my plant room for easier access. I don't have as much room in my plant room and I am filling it up with a lot of my hybrids, while keeping other varieties to use in my hybridizing plans.

Ramping Up Hybridizing

After retiring from work at Digi-Key Corporation in 2014, I decided it was time to hybridize again. I crossed Geyser of Color with Heinz's Seduction in February 2015 and sowed those seeds. They started blooming by the time they were a year old. I had 25 plants from that cross and I registered 12 of them around 2018. That was an amazing cross, with so many unusual colors … most with the "puff" fantasy markings!

I donate my "unwanted ones" from crosses to our local Animal Humane Society Gift Store. Since they all are variegated, they sell fast and everyone is happy with them. I was kept very busy with these, as I put down leaves, recorded the information, took photos of their progress, etc. I only had three crosses in 2017 … saving only five varieties to grow out and register. I was so lucky with my first cross, but these were crosses with those first siblings and many looked the same as their parents, so I didn't keep most of them. In 2019, I had nine different crosses with a lot more colors, ruffles and other variations. I also have three "chimera types" that I am growing out to verify. I have the first suckers potted up and growing nicely, with more on the way.

This spring I had pollinated quite a few blooms and I now have seedpods that I am very hopeful for! Many of those are dried now, but I might sow a few of them in the next few months. Hopefully, they are fertile?

Registering Sports and Crosses

The first plant I registered was Rivermist Watercolor, a sport of Lacy Red. The flowers have wonderful bright green, ruffled edges. These five registered plants were produced by my first cross: Rivermist Galaxy, Rivermist Beguiling, Rivermist Pearls, Rivermist Psycho and Rivermist Zombie. All the plants are standards.

- Rivermist Galaxy (10973) has single-semidouble blue-purple large star/white puff fantasy, pink and red streaks. The foliage is variegated dark green with a pink, ovate, quilted, glossy/variable white-spotted red back.
- Rivermist Beguiling (10971) has single-semidouble medium red-pink large ruffled star/white puff fantasy. Foliage is variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted.

> I had 25 plants from that cross and I registered 12 of them around 2018.

- Rivermist Pearls (10974) has single-semidouble light pink star/white puff fantasy. The foliage is variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted, glossy/variable white-spotted red back.
- Rivermist Psycho (10975) has single-semidouble red-purple large star/white puff fantasy. Variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted, serrated.

Two of the five registered plants from my first cross. Top: Rivermist Beguiling. Bottom: Rivermist Pearls.

•Rivermist Zombie (10986) has single-semidouble. blue-purple large star/white puff fantasy, dark pink streaks. Its foliage is variegated dark green, cream and pink, round, quilted/variable white-spotted red back.

Another of the registered plants from my first cross: Rivermist Zombie.

Dr. Jeff Smith wrote an article in the July-August 2020 issue of *AVM (*Volume 73, Number 4, page 39) on the color features of some plants of my first cross, as "triple fantasy" with two different colors and fantasy types, plus the light-colored "puff" spots on the leaf backs. Rivermist Zombie is an example of triple fantasy.

Most of my later crosses have my hybrid plants or their siblings for one of the parents. A few examples are Rivermist Zeeva, Rivermist Blizzard and Rivermist Oohlala.

Later crosses include Rivermist Zeeva, Rivermist Blizzard and Rivermist Oohlala.

AVSA Booster Fund

By Dianna Walston Kokomo, Indiana

Donations received May 2020 through August 2020 Total: $1175

Geneva — $100-$499

Jeri Anderson, Tucson, AZ
Memphis AVS, Arlington, TN
Tampa AVS, Glenn Shelton, Brandon, FL
In memory of Lynee Wilson, Therese Lyham, and Betty Wise

Multicolor — $50-$99

Bonnie Harris, North Richland Hills, TX
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Heartland AVC, Sebring, FL
In memory of Shirley Berger
Randy McMahill, Ankeny, IA

Two-Tone — $25-$49

Carol Ann Burrell, Sebring, FL
In memory of Shirley Berger
Barbara Conrad, Encinitas, CA
In memory of Dottie Sevel
Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI
Patty Daniel, Winfield, KS
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Linda Garramone, Bay Shore, NY
Donna Mosher, Grove City, OH
Cheryl Riedl, Bellaire, TX
Sylvia Row, Redwood City, CA
Spring Branch AVC, Karla Ross, Conroe, TX
Jill Stern, Deer Park, NY

Thumbprint — Under $25

Donna Becker, San Antonio, TX
Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Leslie Breen, Houston, TX
Amy Cash-Allison, Somonauk, IL
Brenda Dutta, Basking Ridge, NJ
Rowena Scott Comegys, Shreveport, LA
Lorene Connel, Sparks, NV
Colin Dimon, Vestal, NY
Albert Dodson, Lancaster, PA
Brenda Dutta, Basking Ridge, NJ
Christy Grover, Independence, IA
Angelina Grundhof, Gulfport, FL
Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA
Janice Murray, New York, NY
Veronica Novotney, Menor, OH
In memory of Dottie Sevel
Stan Raugh, Temple, PA
Janice Sorensen, Castle Rock, CO
In memory of Bill Foster
Peg Clover Stipek, Denver, CO
Betty Tillman, Fort Worth, TX
Mary L. Vasconcelles, Springfield, IL

New in the AVSA Store! 2021 Calendar, $15. Order yours now!

Georgia: The Peach State

By Kathy Spissman Atlanta, Georgia

Georgia is best known as "The Peach State." This recognizes Georgia-grown peaches, which are renowned for their superior flavor, texture, appearance and nutritious qualities. Georgia also designated the peach as the official state fruit in 1995 and the peach is featured on the Georgia quarter, but we also have an abundance of talent among native Georgians and Atlantans. You will recognize some in the list below right away, and others might surprise you.

James Earl Carter Jr.

Born October 1, 1924, James Earl (Jimmy) Carter served as the 39th President of the United States from 1977 to 1981. He is an American politician, philanthropist, and former farmer who served as a Georgia State Senator from 1963 to 1967 and as the 76th Governor of Georgia from 1971 to 1975. Since leaving the presidency, Carter has remained engaged in political and social projects as a private citizen; in 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in co-founding the Carter Center. The Carter Center has helped mediate conflicts in countries around the world. He and his wife, Rosalynn, also have helped build more than 4,000 homes for Habitat for Humanity since 1984. Carter is the longest-lived president, the longest-retired president, the first to live 40 years after his inauguration, and the first to reach the age of 95.

Former President Jimmy Carter at the Carter Center. Photo by Atlanta Mayor's Office and Courtesy of ACVB and AtlantaPhotos.com.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Born Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929 and living until April 4, 1968, King was an American Christian minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. King is best known for advancing civil rights through nonviolence and civil disobedience.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Image courtesy of Pixabay.

Hank Louis Aaron

Born February 5, 1934, in Mobile, Alabama, Hank Aaron later was nicknamed "Hammer" or "Hammerin' Hank" as an American Major League Baseball (MLB) right fielder. The hall of famer still serves as the senior vice president of the Atlanta Braves. Aaron played 21 seasons for the Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves and two seasons for the Milwaukee Brewers. Aaron held the MLB record for career home runs for 33

years, and he still holds several MLB offensive records. He hit 24 or more home runs every year from 1955 through 1973 and is one of only two players to hit 30 or more home runs in a season at least 15 times.

Asa Griggs Candler

Asa Griggs Candler, the founder of Coca-Cola, was working as a druggist and manufacturer of patented medicines in 1888 when he met John Stith Pemberton and was intrigued by a sweet, carbonated drink Pemberton had developed. Candler bought the Coca-Cola recipe from Pemberton, for an amount rumored to be $2,300. The drink, which was touted as a tonic and headache remedy, was made up of brewed coca leaves, caffeine, carbonated water, and sugar. In 1892, he founded the Coca-Cola Company. The following year, he trademarked the brand and distributed the first dividends to the company's shareholders. Candler lived from 1851 to 1929.

Samuel Truett Cathy

Born in Eadonton, Georgia, in 1921, Samuel Truett Cathy became a businessman, investor, author and philanthropist. In 1946, he founded the Chick-fil-A restaurant chain in an Atlanta suburb called Hapeville. The now-national chain has more than 2,400 restaurants around the country and was the first restaurant to pair shopping and eating by placing a location in an Atlanta mall. Cathy died in 2014 and his son Dan now serves as CEO of the company, which has its corporate headquarters in Atlanta.

Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell

Margaret Mitchell was born in Atlanta on November 8, 1900, and lived there when she died on August 16, 1949. She was an American novelist and journalist. Mitchell wrote only one novel, the American Civil War-era novel "Gone With the Wind," for which she won the National Book Award for Most Distinguished Novel of 1936 and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1937.

Robert Edward "Ted" Turner

Ted Turner is an American media owner, producer and philanthropist. He founded the Cable News Network (CNN), which was the first 24-hour cable news channel and still is headquartered in Atlanta. He began his media work after inheriting his father's billboard business in the 1960s and founded a local Atlanta station in 1970. In the 1980s, he acquired movie studio MGM's library of 2,200 films. Turner is a supporter of the environment and once was the largest landowner in the United States, using much of his land around the country to raise bison.

These directors, actors, musicians and writers also hail from Georgia:

Spike Lee, Film Director
Jeff Foxworthy, Comedian
DeForest Kelley, Doctor on the original Star Trek
Julia Roberts, Actress
Ryan Seacrest, TV and radio personality
Gladys Knight, Soul Singer
Brenda Lee, Country Singer
Usher, Singer-songwriter, dancer and actor

This is just a sampling of the famous people from The Peach State.

We are all looking forward to all the gifted African Violet growers and designers who will display their talents as we celebrate our 75th year at "AVSA Diamond Jubilee-Celebrating African Violets Through The Years" May 30 through June 6, 2021, in Atlanta.

The typewriter used by the author at Atlanta's Margaret Mitchell House. Photo courtesy ACVB Marketing.

2021 AVSA Convention Awards, Atlanta, GA: Our 75th Anniversary Convention and Show

By Sharon Gartner svioletlady@gmail.com

Hello, it is your Awards Chair, Sharon Gartner. Let's celebrate our 75th Anniversary in style! I just want to say how much I missed seeing everyone this year and hope to really celebrate our wonderful hobby together next year. We are just going to bring all the awards we collected for the Arkansas show forward to the Atlanta show.

I want to thank all those individuals, clubs, councils and commercial members who have already given so generously. It is your generosity that makes the show so special and gives the winners that extra incentive to show every year. The Convention Show Awards could not be possible without your help. If your name, club or council is not on this list, don't worry. There is plenty of time to donate to the 2021 awards fund. Please send your check or money order to:

AVSA Office, Awards
P.O. Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

There are many ways to donate. You can give a **specific donation** in remembrance of a special person. You can ask that the money be assigned to a specific variety that they loved to grow or give it as an **undesignated award**.

Growers can look at the awards listing and take note of the varieties that have specific awards assigned. They can then grow those violets in hopes of bringing them to the show and getting an extra award!

If you don't have the variety that has a specific award assigned to it, you could make a list and do a little shopping at the convention!

Any award can be donated as an undesignated award, to be used where needed. This option is best; the funds are sure to be used for awards. For instance, for Best in Class, we have more than 100 classes, or AVSA collection awards, etc. Just make a note on the awards form, which can be found on the www.avsa.org website under the Convention tab.

Awards are a way to give our growers the extra incentive to bring beautiful show plants.

A list of the current awards is now on the AVSA website at www.avsa.org, under the Convention tab. All **undesignated awards** will be used in either the amateur or commercial horticultural or design categories. Although every attempt has been made to list the awards correctly, mistakes happen. However, we reserve the right to modify or change these listings. Please do not hesitate to contact me, at svioletlady@gmail.com.

Let's make this a great convention with awards!!!

Specified Awards —

Amateur Division Collection

$300	Best Holtkamp Collection Holtkamp Greenhouses Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
$200	2nd Best Holtkamp Collection Holtkamp Greenhouses Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
$100	3rd Best Holtkamp Collection Holtkamp Greenhouses Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
$200	Best Robinson Collection The Violet Barn Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)
$100	Second Best Robinson Collection The Violet Barn Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)
$300	Best Buckeye Collection Pat Hancock (OH)

$200 Second Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)

$100 Third Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)

$300 Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

$200 2nd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

$100 3rd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

$200 Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)

$100 2nd Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)

$200 Best Hunter's Hybrid Collection, Standard
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

$75 2nd Best Hunter's Hybrid Collection, Standard
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

$200 Best Hunter's Hybrid Collection, Mini/Semimini
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

$75 2nd Best Hunter's Hybrid Collection Mini/Semimini
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

$250 Best Cajun's Collection
Dr. Minh Bui (MD)

Specific Variety Awards — Amateur Horticulture

$50 Bill Foster Memorial
Bill Foster (TX)

$25 Best Aca's Libby
Bluebird Greenhouse
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)

$50 Best Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler
Cincinnati AVS (OH)

$50 Best Buckeye Seductress
Pat Hancock (OH)

$25 Best Cabbage Patch
Terri Post (IA)

$25 Best Cajun's Code Blue
Karen Buchanan (TN)

$100 Best Concord
Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

$50 Best Del's Spring Blush
In memory of Del Setchel
Violet Reflections Group (IN)

$25 Best Everdina
AVSA, Mary Corondan (TX)

$25 Best Hunter's Exit Wound
Karen Buchanan (TN)

$25 Best Hunter's Kashmir
Karen Buchanan (TN)

$25 Best Janet (Maas)
Janet Riemer (NJ)

$25 Best Jersey Snowflakes
AVC of Morris County (NJ)

$50 Best Jitterbug Breathless
Cincinnati AVS (OH)

$25 Best LE-Karusel
Starz N Streps
Steve and Donna Turner (SC)

$50 Best Lela Marie
Early Bird Violet Club (AL)

$25 Best Lonestar Helen Mahr
Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

$25 Best Lonestar Lady
Richard & Anne Nicholas(TX)

$25 Best Lonestar Snowstorm
Tom and Marge Savage (TX)

$25 Best Lonestar Twilight
Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

$25 Best Lyon's Rockin' Romance
Cathleen Graves (WA)

$20 Best Marching Band
In memory of Kent Stork
Karyn Cichocki (NJ)

$35 Best Ozark Sinningia
Dave's Violets
David Harris (MO)

$100 Best Rodeo Country
Spring Branch AVC (TX)

$25 Best Sailor Boy
In honor of Judy Carter
Mike and Debbie McInnis (IN)

$100 Best The Alps
Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

$25 Best Tina (Maas)
Janet Rieer (NJ)

$25 Best Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier
Bluebird Greenhouse
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)

$25 BIC yellow blossom/any foliage
Janet Fox (CA)

$25 Best in Class 48
Copper State AVC (AZ)

$25 Best Other Gesneriad,
Fibrous Rooted, in Bloom other than
Streptocarpus/Streptocarpella
Richard Carr (OH)

$25 Best Semiminiature
Cathleen Graves (WA)

Specific Design Awards — Amateur Division

$35 Best Natural Garden
Janet Fox (CA)

$35 Best Dish Garden
Janet Fox (CA)

$35 Best Terrarium
Janet Fox (CA)

$50 Best Underwater Design
In memory of Rosemary White
North Coast Gesneriad and AVC (OH)

Undesignated — Amateur Horticulture

$25 Alice Brown (AR)
$50 Cedar Valley Club (IA)
$25 Central Arkansas AVS (AR)
$25 Magic Knight AVS (TX)
$100 Mary Corondan (TX)
$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX
$25 Richmond AVS (VA)

Undesignated — Design Division

$50 Kathy Lahti (MN)

Undesignated — Amateur

$50 1st Austin AVS (TX)
$25 African Violet Council of
Southern California (CA)
$50 African Violet Society of Minnesota (MN)
$25 Albuquerque AVC (NM)
$50 AVS of Greater Tulsa (OK)
$25 AVS of Tulsa (OK)
$25 Barb Lafashia (DE)
$53 Brent T. Johnson (OH)
$15 Bonnie Harris (MN)
$25 Carol Burris (AZ)
$10 Chelsea Tidwell (AR)
$25 Danny Tidwell (AR)
$35 Dave's Violets – David Harris (MO)
$25 Delaware African Violet and
Gesneriad Society (DE)
$50 Dolores Gibbs (TX)
$100 Dr. William E. H. Price (BC, Canada)
$10 Elvie Blakely (FL)
$50 Heart of Jacksonville AVS (FL)
$25 Janice Davidson (TX)
$15 Jeff Smith (IN)
$25 Jo Ann Schrimsher (TX)
$25 Joan Wood (CA)
$19 Judith M. Carter (OK)
$50 Judith M. Carter (OK)
$50 Kathy Lahti (MN)
$25 Laura Perdomo – The Peacock Cottage (FL)
$25 Leonard Re (CA)
$50 Lincoln AVS (NE)
$50 Linda and Albert Hall (MO)
$20 Linda Scott (NM)
$20 Lola Sutherland (CA)
$275 Lone Star AV Council Convention Fund (TX)
$50 Marge and Bill Farrand (MI)
$25 Memphis AVS (TN)
$25 Missouri Valley AVC (SD)
$25 North Star AV Council (MN)
$100 Ohio State AVS
In memory of Bill Foster (OH)
$25 San Diego County AVS (CA)
$50 Sharon Gartner (FL)
$25 Sherrie Wallace (OK)
$100 Tucson AVS (AZ)
$50 The Tidewater AVS (VA)
$25 Tri-Counties AVS (CA)
$25 Tustana AVS (CA)

Celebrating 75 Years

African Violet Society of America

Atlanta

2021

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AVSA 75th Anniversary: Applause to Our Valued Commercial Legends

By Carolee Carter, Chair, AVSA Publications Committee

One of the things we most missed from not having a convention this year is that mad dash into the sales room to buy plants! Our commercial vendors work very hard all year to not only produce new hybridized varieties, but also to travel many miles to each convention site with loaded vans so that we can spend lots of money increasing our collections — only, of course, when we get home saying, "I have too many plants!" But, we love every one of them, don't we?

I am writing this in late summer during our COVID-19 pandemic, and as I was reading my newspaper recently, I was struck by a column that should be a boost to all African violet and other gesneriad growers. It said "It wasn't just toilet paper that people stocked up on during the pandemic. There was a run on houseplants too!"

Really? Yes, apparently the demand for greenery was so high at one online plant store that some varieties were consistently sold out. The customers wanted plants that they could grow in their houses or apartments, and then they wanted to learn how to grow them. African violets were high on the demand list.

That demand likely was filled by some of our long-time Commercial Members, many of whom are legendary. So, what constitutes a legendary figure anyway? Webster's dictionary defines it as "extremely well-known; famous or renowned." I contacted several commercial vendors who were in business in 1996 to ask what changes they have witnessed during the past 25 years.

Our legendary Commercial Members have some great insights and stories. Here is what they revealed.

> "I will continue to supply good quality plants for a reasonable price."

Pat Hancock, Buckeye Violets

Despite the fact that Pat Hancock, the famous hybridizer of the Buckeye series of African violets, has sold her online commercial business (to Violet Peddlers Plus) and has retired, her reflections on her commercial life are fascinating. Pat won the AVSA Hudson Award in 2015. Here are some thoughts that she shared:

"My life has been richly blessed by my hybridizing and by being an AVSA commercial for the past 25 years or more. Meeting and knowing so many great people would never have happened to me had it not been for my selling at AVSA convention shows.

"I began hybridizing Buckeye violets in 1992, and for some time I was the only person growing and showing them. It was my plan that they would have fewer, larger leaves that would fall like shingles on a roof and appear more symmetrical. I received many red ribbons from judges with comments that the "leaves were too large." My plants did not look like the plants with more, smaller leaves that they were accustomed to judging.

"In 2005, at the convention in Cincinnati, things began to change. My friend, Ann Thomas, won the best standard AVSA collection with three Buckeyes, and judges made very nice comments to her and to me. It was also at this show that I was awarded the Bronze Medal Award for my hybridizing efforts. I had not signed up for the banquet on that Saturday night since it was my daughter's birthday. Joyce Stork kept telling me she had an extra ticket and tried to get Ann and me to stay. I finally agreed and was completely surprised by the award. I couldn't stop crying, and I'm sure the pictures of that night were pretty bad! I had only my working clothes on, and I just couldn't stop crying!

"When I first became a commercial, I would usually have one person helping me. When the doors would open to the sales room at the convention, everyone would run to Rob's or Paul's sales tables. After a while, they would gradually trickle over to my table and buy a few Buckeyes.

"At Cherry Hill in 2011, Lynn Lombard came into the sales room and announced "get ready, we are going to open the doors!" I said to my helper 'we've got time — they won't be here for a while.' Much to my surprise, the doors opened, and we were bombarded! We couldn't handle the rush. Thelma Miller saw the look on my face and said 'you need help?' I nodded, and she came behind and helped me sell.

"After that, sales increased every year as my plants became more and more popular. I am so grateful to all the great growers who grew and showed my plants, especially those who shoved 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler' to the top of the list.

"In 2019 in Houston, I had four helpers. We had a very hard time handling the opening crowd. People were taking two baskets and filling them to the brim!

"I hope growers will continue to grow and show Buckeyes until something newer and better comes along. I am flattered to know that many new hybridizers are using Buckeyes in their programs. Houston was my last show as a commercial. My age and the coronavirus have made me stop. I wish you all 'Great Growing."

Jo Schrimsher, JoS Violets

Jo Schrimser wrote, "When I started JoS Violets in the early 1980s, I had a computer and a dot matrix printer. I advertised in the *AVM*, Dixie (DAVS) and Lone Star (LSAVC) newsletters. I mailed out my lists and took orders by mail and phone. In the 1990s, my daughter-in-law set up my website. Mail-order business has continued to grow since then.

"I have so enjoyed attending and learning so much at the annual shows for AVSA, Dixie and the Lone Star AVC. I have made so many friends from all over the United States and some other countries. Customers seem to be most interested in many of the vintage varieties and the newest varieties. Sometimes, after a picture of a variety appears in the *AVM*, I cannot keep up with the demand.

"I will continue to supply good quality plants for a reasonable price. African violet growers are the best friends and customers!"

Connie Swift Cornell, Swift Moist-Rite Planters

Connie Swift Cornell wrote, "Our company, Swift Moist-Rite Planters, was started by my parents [Jack and June Swift; June is pictured here] in the mid-1970s. My dad invented the planter's design, and he and my mom promoted them for several decades until my dad's health declined due to multiple strokes. My mom continued to fill orders for the planters after he passed away, but she didn't go to national conventions. She was pretty active into her nineties, but she passed away from cancer in 2018.

"I am their only child and inherited their Trust, including becoming the owner of the Swift Moist-Rite company. After retiring from my nursing career at the end of 2019, my husband, David Cornell, and I decided to start making Swift Moist-Rite planters again. We attended our Tulsa African Violet Club's sale in February and sold many planters (1 to 2 at a time), mostly to people who had never heard of them.

"We had planned to sell at the convention in Little Rock last May, but as we all know, it was cancelled due to COVID-19. We are advertising our planters in the *AVM*, on Facebook and through our website: www.swiftmoistriteplanters.com. We have enjoyed all the African violet people we have been able to meet through emails, etc. We have begun growing violets and have acquired some of my mom's many hybrids."

Paul Sorano,
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

Paul was unable to participate because of a heavy workload, but I encourage everyone to revisit the article that Richard Craft wrote about Paul and Lyndon Lyon in the September/October 2019 issue of *AVM*. It's a wonderful visit into Paul's world of hybridizing and growing. And . . . Lyndon Lyon's son, Robert, wrote a wonderful remembrance of Lyndon Lyon after his passing in the July-August 1999 *AVM* (page 47).

Ronn Nadeau,
Nadeau African Violet Seeds

Ronn Nadeau has been supplying us with African violet seeds for a long time, and I was happy to hear from him about his hybridizing and seed production journey. Here's what he had to say:

"In 1974, soon after starting my career in organic chemistry at Monsanto Co., I revived a hobby I had enjoyed as a preteen, finding nice African violets and propagating them from leaf cuttings. This time around, I got into hybridizing and soon had more seeds than I could use. So, I put them up for sale with ads in the *AVM* and found buyers at a slow but steady pace.

"In 1980, I married Katsuko Shimizu of Tokyo, Japan, and she enthusiastically took on some of the seed production work. I bought ads in several magazines and the seeds sold well. We hired two part-time people to increase production, which by that time included selling gram quantities to seed companies. One gram of African violet seeds is approximately 100,000 seeds.

"Leaping ahead to 1998, I retired from Monsanto. Before then, retail seed sales were conducted via an 800 number. One year later, I created a website (NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com) and started receiving orders from around the globe. In every order I asked customers how they heard of my seeds. Of those who replied, around 80 percent said 'Googled African violet seeds' or similar. Also, there are several social media groups specializing in African violets, and my seeds are often discussed there. I never could have guessed that so many people in the world are curious about African violet seeds! But there are a lot of people on this planet, and even if only a tiny, tiny percent of them occasionally think about African violet seeds, it adds up to a viable number for business. Many overseas customers have expressed joy upon learning about my African violet seeds because import restrictions severely limit leaves and plants from entering their countries.

"Recently I added an exciting new feature to my seed offerings. Whereas in the past I sold seeds only as mixtures of many crosses, I now sell some that come from specific crosses. On my website, for each specific cross, there are photos of the pod and pollen parents and of their fully developed blooming babies.

"What is the future of African violet seed production? Mine is the only company that produces African violet seeds in large quantities for sales to individuals and large seed companies.

"Pollination of African violet flowers is not easy because their pollen is enclosed within small yellow pollen sacs. Traditional pollination methods are good for making hundreds of seeds while hybridizing but are useless for making millions of seeds for selling. Also, it is necessary to have male/female pollination couples that make a lot of seeds per pollination — 500 to 1000, instead of the more normal number of 0 to 200. Finally, it is necessary that our seeds produce attractive babies.

"I continually search for more parent couples that make a lot of seeds that produce attractive new plants. In this *AVM* issue, page 18, I tell the seeds-to-blooms story of specific cross seeds from parents 'WIN x SKI.'"

Ralph Robinson,
The Violet Barn

Ralph Robinson has been growing and exhibiting since 1975 and has been shipping to customers worldwide since 1985. He and Olive Ma Robinson are the hybridizers of the Rob's and Ma's variety series that we all love.

I talked with Ralph (Rob) to ask him about how his business has evolved. He began by saying that "it's not a business where little ladies send checks in the mail for the plants they want like they did back then. There was no Internet, and they saw violets they wanted to buy at their local shows. Most of our customers were AVSA members and members of their local societies.

"In the beginning, The Violet Barn just offered different varieties of African violets, and then in the 90s, we began selling Streptocarpus, and we were the only ones selling them. Today, even if we sold nothing else and just sold streps, we could survive. It's the bread and butter for us. Then, kohlerias began to become popular, and when we had them in stock, they were gone in a matter of days.

"This year, because of COVID-19 with people being stuck in their homes, what we've sold through August is what we normally sell through the end of the year. It's been a really hard year to keep up with certain varieties, and we find ourselves apologizing to people that we don't have what they want. We only list on the website what we have. If you see it, we have it. If you order it, we ship it and we do not send substitutes."

I asked if he and Olive were still hybridizing, and he said "there's simply no time for it. We are keeping up with so many orders from people who want what we list that the time and effort it takes to hybridize new varieties just doesn't exist.

"In the 70s there were a number of businesses that made their living selling African violets as opposed to how it has become a second income. We hoped there would be a younger person who would like to make a career out of this, but that's not likely."

I asked whether eBay sales have hurt, and he said it's a good thing that those who originally buy on eBay get introduced to the hobby that way. "The downside is that they are only looking at what that grower is offering. But, when you go on The Violet Barn website, it's like you become an impulsive shopper in a mall. You see what you were originally looking for, and then you spot a species, or a streptocarpus or a kohleria, and become hooked with other things that you were unaware of before, and the possibilities are more conducive to widening your collections to plants you would never have considered before."

David Harris,
Dave's Violets

David Harris has been busy in the African violet world for a long time, and his view of what has changed is interesting.

"I have seen much change in my nearly 30 years of growing plants. One example that readily comes to mind is that plastic pot companies are being bought out by their competition. The price of plastic has escalated by as much as six to seven times over cost.

"Another change is the decline in show attendance. I joined AVSA in 1992 and attended several local club shows, where, of course, I purchased African violets. When I attended my first AVSA convention in 1995, back in those days we had over 650 attendees. Today, 300-plus people are considered normal. In the 1998 AVSA convention in Sacramento, California, I saw more families attending, and there were rides! During those years some conventions were held in April instead of May, and I never could figure out why.

"In 1994, I attended a show on the outskirts of Kansas City. While looking at plants to buy, a small plant called a "sinningia" caught my eye. I waited for several hours to see the lady who grew it so she could tell me everything she knew about how to grow them. Six months later I had a small collection of sinningias!

"Here is where the past and future meet. Sinningias are my specialty. Back in the early days you saw very

few of them in shows. I started to grow a lot of them to make them more available to buy, and by doing this you began to see more sinningias in shows. Then, I started to cross the sinningias, calling my hybrids the Ozark's series. What has made me proud is that I have seen the Ozark's series being used in other sinningia crosses.

"During my early show days, I saw about 90 percent African violets and 10 percent Other Gesneriads entered into the show. Today, the show runs about 60 percent African violets and around 35 percent Other Gesneriads. And, back in those early days, the AVSA Commercial Members mailed catalogs to hobbyists to encourage orders. Now, the Internet is how most people order and "daydream" about buying new and older plants. I still receive and fulfill requests for a mailed price list to whoever asks.

"My memory of arriving at AVSA conventions in those early days is seeing so many friends and the commercial members such as the Pittmans (Hortense with all her beautiful mini-violets), Sandy and Shirley Sanders (I miss them), Joyce and Kent Stork, Paul Sorano, the Ness's and many more. I can't forget my good friends and buddies John and Doris Brownlie either — seeing them in the sales room with well over 1,000 African violet leaves cut and perfectly wrapped. Just amazing!

"If you want to see AVSA grow, and if you like *African Violet Magazine*, keep renewing your membership and encourage new people to join. Join your local club and work to support that club!

> ... in the 90s, we began selling Streptocarpus, and we were the only ones selling them.

"In closing, please support our commercial members. We are losing so many from days gone by; there are only two left who have been in the sales room longer than I have."

Conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed reading about these commercial legends who have been in business for more than 25 years. They have made our hobby so much more enjoyable because of the ease to add "must-have" varieties to our collections.

Keep in mind that those featured in this article are not the only AVSA Commercial Members. There are many more, so check out their ads at the back of our magazine and go shopping!

BLOOMLALA
Adorn Yourself in Violets
Beautiful clothing items featuring African violets from Bloomlala!
Use code JOY when you order online and AVSA receives a portion of the proceeds.
bloomlala.com/collections/violet

75th Anniversary: AVSA Commercial Members, 1980s

Photos by Lynn Lombard

L to R: Barbara Elkin of Auburn, California; Barbara and John Cook, Cape Cod Violetry, Falmouth, Massachusetts; Dottie Wilson, Wilson's Violet Haven, Bryan, Texas.

L to R: Joyce and Kent Stork, Kent's Flowers, Fremont, Nebraska; June and Jack Swift, Swift Moist Rite Planters, Dallas, Texas; Gene and Joanne Lloyd, Lloyd's African Violets, Cato, New York.

L to R: Leila Engenites, Annalee Violetry, Bayside, New York; Linda Ray, Ray's Violets, College Station, Texas; Anne Tinari (left) of Tinari Greenhouses, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, and Melvin Robey, author of "African Violets, Queens of the Indoor Gardening Kingdom," Palm Springs, California.

AVSA 75th Anniversary: 2005 to 2010

L to R: Right side of Court of Honor, Cincinnati, 2005; 60th Anniversary Tea with Bev Promersberger (l) and Marge Savage; Minneapolis, 2006; Court of Honor, 2007, Denver. Photos by Janet Riemer.

L to R: Olive Ma Robinson design demonstration, Denver, 2007; Show winners, Tulsa, 2008; Pat Hancock and Lori Hilfer pausing with Mel Grice on drive to Reno, 2009. Photos by Mel Grice.

L to R: Partial Court of Honor, Reno, 2009, photo by Janet Riemer; Lynn Lombard, Reno, 2009; Showroom in Raleigh, NC, 2010. Photos by Mel Grice.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Blue Dragon

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: L. Lyon/P. Sorano
Hybridized in 2005,
Honor Roll in 2008, Best Varieties list in 2019 and 2020

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Harbor Blue

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Exhibited by: Rodney Barnett
Hybridized by: T. Weber
From Best AVSA Collection/ Standards, 2010
Large

Contest Entry —

My Adventure with "White Queens"

By Frank Tropea Somerville, Massachusetts

I first started growing African violets many years ago. I bought a white-flowered one and a blue-flowered one from Market Basket. I thought both looked pretty and I tried to take good care of them. The white one I found to be really pretty. Both violets even bloomed in the winter, which cheered me up in the cold, bleak New England winter. I then read of people who bred or — more properly, cloned — baby violets from leaves.

I had some extra pots and planting soil and I cut off some leaves from the white one with short stems attached to the leaves. As instructed, I put the short stems and the leaves into the fresh soil and I watered the pot with a little fertilizer and warm water. Then I placed a banana clear plastic bag over the pot with a rubber band. Then I waited. And I am very glad I waited. Maybe I overwatered the white-flowered plant too much because it died on me. But after waiting three months, I had its baby plants. When they were big enough, I transplanted them together into a separate, larger pot. They bloomed about nine months later and really reminded me of the mother plant. They are nothing fancy, but I have sentiment attached to those plain but pretty white ones.

Meeting White Queen

Then I joined the AVSA and the Boston club. A dear friend of mine, Chris Mason, told me about the violets from a famous greenhouse in New York State named Lyndon Lyons. On my computer screen I found the photos of their fancy violets totally exquisite and beautiful. But Chris told me of a special white violet he had once raised called EK-Belaia Koroleva. It's a Russian variety from E. Korshunova (and called "White Queen" by some sellers and growers here in the states) that is rather rare in this state. I got my first two from a breeder named Joann in Texas.

But after waiting three months, I had its baby plants.

Unfortunately, I lost one but the other one grew big and gave me the most ornate and beautiful white blossoms I ever beheld. Later, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses began selling some and I got three more from them. I decided to take some leaves several months ago from my biggest (Joann's) White Queen and breed them. I did the usual soil routine and nearly 2 1/2 months later, they began sprouting babies.

I put both leaves that have sprouted babies in separate little pots with good soil and a little fertilizer and watered them well. I placed them where they get enough light but are in indirect sunlight. I've also become great friends with Peggy Crawford and she generously gave me some plant lights to use.

I've promised Peggy and Chris each an EK-Belaia Koroleva mother leaf and some babies so they can raise a few for themselves.

What I am going to do with all the babies when every leaf I have in the breeding bowl has her plantlets, I do not know. But these plants are so enchantingly beautiful I will undoubtedly keep some and give the rest to hobbyists who can really appreciate them and nurture them. Happy growing.

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

S. tongwensis 3397 Uppsala Clone

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Best in Show for Dr. Bill Price, 2008 National Show
Species

Contest Entry —

Alexei Kuznetsov Remembered

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

My first SK- African violet — СК-Первая Любовь (SK-First Love) — arrived in the mail on a rainy Wednesday afternoon in April. At that time, I knew nothing about Alexei Kuznetsov and his hybridizing work; I just wanted a few interesting and different new African violet plants to grow and СК-Первая Любовь was reasonably priced on eBay. I opened the box, took out the carefully packaged blooming plant inside, and was astonished by the size and number of blossoms on such a tiny plant.

SK-First Love. Photo courtesy of Ekaterina Zybinova.

Learning About Alexei

Of course, I wanted to know more about SK- hybrids, so I went online and did some research. I learned that the hybridizer of my СК-Первая Любовь was a young man named Alexei Kuznetsov and that he created many wonderful varieties — mostly miniatures and semi-miniatures, which are my favorites. I have since added several to my collection and they have quickly become like little friends, always on hand to brighten my day. During my research, I also learned — with great sadness — that Alexei died tragically in 2017 at only 32 years old.

> The more I researched, the more I understood that Alexei was a rare and special human being.

Since I would never have the opportunity to meet or communicate with Alexei, I decided to do the next best thing: I set out to try to get a sense of the man he was. With the help of Google and some Russian-speaking African violet friends, I was able to translate some Russian articles and read the posts and comments on some Russian-language blogs. Without exception, Alexei was praised as a quiet, generous, and kind man with a strong perfectionist streak and a great passion for his African violet hybrids and those who grow them.

Alexei with some of his hybrids in Dom Fialki. Photo by Ekaterina Zybinova.

The more I researched, the more I understood that Alexei was a rare and special human being. With no formal background in genetics, engineering, or any subject related to African violet hybridization, he managed to make unique and lasting contributions to the world of African violets. An SK- African violet generally is characterized by small size, a perfect and naturally occurring rosette form, and a tremendous bloom count. At a time when his fellow growers were keenly interested in large blooms and even larger plants, Alexei dared to be original and strive for perfect specimens that display in miniature all of the best traits of Russian and Ukrainian hybrids. In his short life, Alexei expanded the boundaries of African violet genetics. The appeal of Alexei's exquisite hybrids crosses international boundaries, too. Growers in the United States adore them.

American Love of SK- Violets

American African violet growers' love for his hybrids would no doubt have pleased Alexei greatly. Although he abhorred being in the spotlight and shied away from the admiration he received in the online African violet forums and blogs, where he was praised so often for his accomplishments and generosity, he loved to see his hybrids appreciated. He also would share them generously, usually at no cost, with anyone who expressed an interest. Alexei spent a great deal of time and energy teaching fellow African violet enthusiasts about the benefits of wick watering and the process of hybridization; in short, he was respected, admired, and even loved by anyone who had the chance to get to know him.

Although Alexei passed away before most American growers had a chance to meet or speak with him, it is safe to say that they would surely have felt the same way his compatriots did. As part of my research, I asked American African violet growers to share their feelings about Alexei's hybrids. Through this approach, I located one American African violet enthusiast who had a chance to travel to Russia and see the place where Alexei's amazing hybrids first were displayed. Marie Glass of Black Oak Violets writes:

"I really do not think that there is another flower in this world with as much power to spread happiness and love as the African violet. Struck by their beauty in the early 1970s, I became a first-generation violet grower in my family. It was not until 2013, however, that I became fully aware of that power as I saw it demonstrated at Dom Fialki, the "House of Violets" in Moscow. Entranced by the Russian hybrids that filled the shelves of this little shop, I listened intently as Vladimir Kalgin told me that their breathtakingly big blooms provided beauty for the people struggling to establish a new way of life. 'They don't grow potatoes,' he said, 'they are a bit of luxury that can be had.'

"I searched his shelves for the presence of miniature varieties, which were mainly what I grew at that time. He patiently explained to me that most purchasers were looking for BIG, and he shaped that in the air with his hands. I came home from Russia with many beautiful memories and three violet leaves that were to change my life.

"Russian hybrids were just beginning to become readily available in the United States. I would spend many hours searching for Russian hybrids on the internet. As I took my plants to market, people were drawn to the large blooms. I, however, was still looking for the same beauty on a smaller scale.

"As time went on, I found some. They were little bits of perfection: rosettes of well-behaved leaves and blooms that were very true to their names. 'Apple Orchard' took me back to the delicate blossoms found on my grandmother's trees. 'Landscape in the Mist' has a mysterious air about it, and then there is 'First Love.' How one cannot want to cup that in their hand and take it home is beyond me!

"So it was with great sadness that I heard the whispers of Alexei's passing at the Buffalo AVSA Convention in 2018. So young: the death of a promise, an ending nearly before a true beginning, I have made it my goal as a grower to make sure that Alexei's beautiful creations continue to live. I am collecting as many of his hybrids as I am able to locate and then sharing starts with fellow growers with the only stipulation being that they grow these varieties and share them so that his talent as a hybridizer lives far into the future. I believe that this tribute of beauty is the most fitting one we can bestow."

Even enthusiasts new to the African violet world are enchanted by Alexei's hybrids. Theresa Green Davis, a recent arrival on the African violet scene, responded to my call for testimonials with words that I believe exemplify most Americans' first impression of Alexei's work: "*Currently I have two of Alexei's beautiful violets — SK-Apple Orchard and SK-Phoenix. I love them both and they grow and bloom very well for me. I plan to add more of his violets to my collection. Wish me luck on finding them all!*"

Although it has been more than three years since Alexei left us to wonder what he might have accomplished had his time on Earth been longer, his marvelous African violet hybrids ensure that he will always be remembered. Alexei's career may have been brief, but his legacy will endure as long as people enjoy growing and sharing African violets. Even though I never had a chance to know Alexei, I feel his spirit every time I see or care for one of his African violet jewels and I know many others feel the same way. Thank you, Alexei Kuznetsov, for leaving behind such beautiful reflections of the kind and generous man you were. From all of us here in the United States: Спасибо, мой друг [Thank you, my friend!].

Sk-Foggy Landscape (left) and SK-Voljyshka (right). Photos by Ekaterina Zybinova.

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: $95

Two-tone — $25-$49
Burbank AVS, Burbank, CA
Caroline Storey, San Marcos, TX

Thumbprint — Under $25
Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Angelina Grundhof, Gulfport, FL

Thumbprint (Continued)
Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL
Debbie McInnis, Floyds Knob, IN

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Aca's Red Ember

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Hybridized by: J. Brownlie
Honor Roll, 2007
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Broadway Star Trail

AVSA 75th Anniversary
Won Best in Show for
Dr. Bill Price,
2009 National Show
Semimini Trailer

In Memory

Hortense Pittman

Hortense Pittman, age 94, of Celina, Texas, passed away August 26, 2020. She was born February 12, 1926, in Pilot Point, Texas, to Roy Jackson and Thelma (Bradford) Ellison. She married William Fredrick Pope on September 30, 1942, who preceded her in death in 1965. She married Jessie Ray Pittman on December 3, 1966, in San Antonio, Texas.

Hortense was an exceptional woman who lived a remarkable life. As a young woman, she baked cakes and pies for the family store in Celina while honing her skills as a seamstress. She eventually sewed costumes for the Dallas Ballet and dresses for prominent women in Dallas. Many years later, Ray gave her an African violet as a birthday present.

The African violet world was blessed that day by Ray Pittman giving his lovely wife a beautiful African violet. That African violet started her career in violet hybridizing and she joined the Alamo African Violet Society of San Antonio, Texas, in the late 1960s. She also joined AVSA. While president of the local society, her club had its first AVSA judged show.

In 1975, Hortense assisted with the organization of Lone Star African Violet Council to support the AVSA National Convention in Austin, Texas, in 1978. Hortense attended her first national convention in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1977. She attended all AVSA National Conventions and Lone Star Conventions until late in her life.

Hortense became a Commercial Member of AVSA in 1978. She had her first display table at the Austin convention that year. She had quite a few display tables at conventions and won numerous awards, including Best New Cultivar, over the years. She started hybridizing African violets in the early 1970s. Her first series was the standards in the "Alamo Series," and her last series was the miniatures and semimimis of the "Jolly Series." She has more than 800 varieties listed in AVSA First Class, and of these, more than 450 are registered African violets. Hortense hybridized standards, miniatures, semiminiatures and trailers over the years.

Hortense served AVSA for more than 50 years as a Member, Commercial Member, Master Judge, Hybridizer, Director, 3rd Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and President. She was the 27th President of AVSA, serving in that role from 1993 to 1995.

Hortense has received the following AVSA Awards: Bronze Medal for Horticultural Achievement in 1986, Honorary Life Membership in 1995, and Hall of Fame in 2008.

Her African violet family will remember Hortense as the face of African violets for more than 50 years. She was the model for profound love of African violets and commitment to AVSA and the African violet family. She had an unparalleled work ethic and drive and she spoke encouragement and life to everyone she met. We will miss her and rejoice that she had hybridized so many lovely African violets that will give her violet family the pleasure of growing and showing for many years. Hortense was preceded in death by her husband, Jesse Ray Pittman, and a daughter and stepson. She is survived by her stepdaughter, six grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and numerous other family members.

Barbara Elkin

Northern California's African Violet Societies and AVSA lost one of our foundation pillars this summer when Ms. Barbara Elkin passed away in her sleep at the young age of 89 years. Barbara was a life member of AVSA, a Master Judge, teacher of judges,

a hybridizer, and the past Vintage Violets columnist for the *African Violet Magazine*. She held multiple officer positions for AVSA and in Northern California clubs. Barbara also was an important member of the Gesneriad Society as one of their judges and a teacher of judges. Barbara is greatly missed.

With her big heart and caring nature, Barbara encouraged several Northern California African Violet Society members to become full members of AVSA and judges. She taught judging schools year after year, instilling in her students the need to be honest and kind in their judging endeavors. Besides teaching judging schools, her classes encouraged learning, and were always supported with a wonderful home-cooked meal. Barbara taught Society members how to create designs whenever a local show was being staged. She also encouraged all participants to share supplies and ideas as they set up their entries for the show. This created a supportive and wonderful learning environment for putting on shows, and her students spread her mantra to other shows at the state and national levels.

Barbara served as the president, vice president and secretary of Capitol City African Violet Society in Sacramento. She also held offices in the Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Society in Sacramento; the African Violet Society of South Bay, San Francisco; and Nite Bloomers African Violet Society. She has held the positions of president, vice president, treasurer and recording secretary for the Northern California Council of African Violet Societies. She was president and treasurer of the African Violet Society Judges Council of Northern California. For many years, Barbara chaired the Vintage Violet Committee for AVSA. She also served on the Awards Committee, Building and Maintenance Committee, Convention Committee, and as chair of the Library Committee for AVSA. Barbara was an AVSA Director and chaired two National Conventions, in 1998 and 2009. She won the Hudson Affiliate Leadership Award. For decades, until her health declined, she never missed a national convention.

Barbara could grow anything well, and her lovely home with its built-in greenhouse was full of beautiful and unique gesneriads. Barbara was well known for her baking, cooking, canning and making of preserves. She always brought home top awards for her efforts from local competitions. Barbara was married to her husband, Jack, for more than 60 years, until he passed; they had three children, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was one of a kind and cannot be replaced.

Ann Shirley

The Memphis African Violet Society has lost a treasured member, Ann Shirley. She passed away July 20. Ann came into the club in the 1960s and served as its president, vice-president and treasurer over the years. Through hard work and dedication, Ann became an AVSA Master Judge.

Ann was a serious grower, an expert, actually. She showed beautiful mini and semimini African violets and episcias. She shared her vast knowledge with every member of our club and encouraged us to grow. A better friend and mentor cannot be found. She touched all our lives and we will truly miss Ann.

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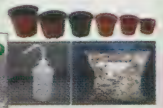

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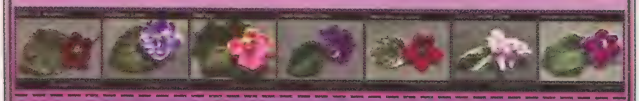

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